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THE RIVER OF GOD

THE SOURCE-STREAM FOR MORALS AND RELIGION

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THE SOURCE-STREAM FOR MORALS AND RELIGION

BY
ARTHUR MULFORD BAKER, PH.D.

NASHVILLE, TENN.
COKESBURY PRESS
1930

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PREFACE

In this somewhat sketchy survey of a very broad field I have tried by a scientific use of facts and principles to prove that spiritual force, at least in so far as it has to do with morals and religion, is all-pervasive in our natural world; that it is governed by universal laws; and that it is available for man's uses to the extent that these laws are obeyed. Theological terms and doctrines, except for their historical values, have been avoided as far as possible. The purpose has been to get at the spiritual force back of religious systems and ethical codes, to learn its norms or standards, and to discover what results follow when these standards are adhered to.

I am deeply grateful to Prof. W. B. Elkin, Ph.D., of Indiana University, for direction and for painstaking criticism of the MS. I wish also to express my gratitude to Prof. A. C. Zenos, D.D., LL.D., of the Presbyterian Theological Seminary of Chicago, and to Prof. Rufus M. Jones, Litt.D., LL.D., of Haverford College, for valuable suggestions and encouragement. Further acknowledgments are due to many authors, references to some of whose books are made in the footnotes.

A. M. B.

Philadelphia, Pa.

CONTENTS

PAGE

PREFACE 5

INTRODUCTION 9
Authority in Ethics and Religion—Spiritual Forces—A Spiritual Measuring Line—Universal Spiritual Law.

CHAPTER

I. DIFFICULTIES 19
A Multiplicity of Standards—The Existence of Such a Standard Denied—The Historical-Critical Study of the New Testament—Differences Between Christians—Similarities Between Christianity and Other Religions—Different Views Held by Scholars—Differences Between Bible Students—Differences Between Scholars and Theologians—Differences Between Scientist and Theologian—Separation Between Ethics and Religion—Deductions.

II. ENCOURAGEMENTS 34
Continuity in Morals—Continuity in Religion—Jesus Announced a Spiritual Standard—Such Standard Found in Physical Science—Morals and Religion Universal—Desire for Immortality—Inner Consciousness of Christians—Absence of Disproof of Fixed Spiritual Standards—Union of Religion and Morals—Practical Spiritual Attainments—Deduction.

III. THE LAW OF CONTINUITY 44
Henotheism—Polytheism—Religion of State—Buddhism—Kindred Religions—Monotheism: The Religion of Israel.

CHAPTER PAGE

IV. CHRIST THE CENTER OF CHRISTIANITY . . 61
Jewish Ideas Transformed—The Birth of Christianity—The Center of Christianity a Person—The Spiritual Current—Christ the Center of Creeds—Jesus the Center of Individual Christian Life—Conclusions.

V. SPIRITUAL FORCE IN HISTORY 86
Immediate Results through Following the Love Standard—Christianity and Rome—The Early Christian Community in Europe—Results of This Doubtful Victory

VI. SPIRITUAL FORCE IN SOCIAL GROUPS . . . 105
The Republic of Geneva—Oberlin's Mountain Community—Mary Slessor of Calabar—Sunday Schools—Y. M. C. A. and Y. W. C. A.—Young People's Societies—The Quakers—Conclusions.

VII. AUTHORITY FOR RELIGION AND ETHICS . . 121
Using Spiritual Forces—The Problem of Evil—Union of Morals and Religion—Jesus' Conception of Morals and Religion.

VIII. THE INDIVIDUAL THE SPIRITUAL UNIT . . 135
The Sense of Guilt—Spiritual Force in Individuals—The Changed World—Changed Men and Women.

IX. LOVE A UNIFYING FORCE 161
Promotes Chief Objectives of Life—Achieves Social Ideals—Sustaining Power.

INTRODUCTION

WHETHER a man belongs to a cannibal tribe or is a member of a college community, the first test applied to him is to discover whether he is good or bad. Of an act it is of first importance to know whether it was right or wrong. Thus man is weighed in the spiritual "scales" before he is measured to discover his mental, physical, or financial standing.

Universal agreement as to the goodness or badness of a person, or of the rightness or wrongness of an act, is hard to obtain. A man considered good by one group may by another group be condemned as bad. One man charges that an act was vicious while another asserts that it was virtuous. Is there then no spiritual "magnetic pole"? Or do we only need to discover a "magnetic needle" which points with unerring accuracy toward some fixed spiritual polestar? Are there fixed standards back of all morals and religion? Would following such standards lead to definite results such as the scientist obtains through the use of physical laws?

Spiritually the race is in motion: it appears to be moving toward some fixed goal. Religiously, morally, socially, æsthetically, and all that goes to make up the spiritual, man is different from what he was at the dawn of history; and he is better. The fact that race movement has been forward and upward suggests that there are guiding standards in the spiritual realm.

Where there is motion there must be force—in the spiritual as well as in the physical realm. Where there is continuous progress there must be a path or channel along which force moves, or by which it is directed. Before a force can be used to secure maximum results its laws of working—its *modus operandi*—must be known. Science establishes such standards or principles before it makes marked progress in any physical realm. The discovery of final standards in morals and religion would make for definite advance in these fields. This in itself may be indicative of the existence of such definite standards. Is there a final norm, or standard, for morals? Is there such a final standard for religion? May there be one final standard for both these spiritual realms?

Some of the best work done in the fields of ethics and religion has been done by workers in other fields whose researches carried them over into the spiritual spheres. Contributions made by psychologists are examples. Doubtless all spiritual progress will be conditioned by psychological discoveries and principles. But psychology does not cover the whole spiritual field. To date its contributions to ethics and religion are largely negative. It spends too much time over such arguments as: Can man posit of God what he has not learned in the realm of experience?[1] But workers in the fields of morals and religion should enlist the aid

[1] See Leuba, "Psychological Study of Religion," pp. 202f.; Höffding, "The Philosophy of Religion," pp. 322-331.

of psychologists and use what these earnest workers have learned to aid in their own efforts.

Plainly, spiritual workers need to know the forces and the standards of measurement for their field; and they must learn right methods, but they must know their own field. The scientific method may be used by all searchers after truth; but tools, measuring lines, and standards will be peculiar to each field. Without the microscope and the telescope much of the material world would still be unknown to us. But these powerful instruments have not brought one new fact from the spiritual world.

Spiritual matters, especially those classed as religious, were the first to receive man's serious thought. Man's greatest progress has been spiritual, although he has understood so little the forces of the spiritual realm. Man's greatest progress must continue to be spiritual; because as new physical forces are discovered and brought into use new demands are made upon the spiritual. Science has just announced the discovery of a poison, which is easily and simply made, a teaspoonful of which would kill millions. And this could be scattered broadcast over cities and country from an airplane. Is man spiritually strong enough to possess such knowledge? It is imperative that man's conception of truth and right, of brotherhood and service, of beauty and holiness shall keep ahead of the growth of material forces. Man must be stronger than the forces he commands.

Spiritual development depends upon an understand-

ing of the laws of spiritual forces. Are spiritual forces so regular in their movements that definite knowledge of their laws may be had? Reasoning from analogy, it is natural to conclude that the spiritual realm is under fixed law; likewise, that, since something can be known about these laws, this knowledge can be added to *ad infinitum.*

Authority in Ethics and Religion

What right has ethics or religion to decide whether an act is right or wrong, or whether a man is good or bad? Either the authority comes from an ethical or religious system, or it rests upon fundamental right and fundamental goodness. These two possible sources seem to be mutually exclusive. The tendency to change, seemingly inherent in ethical systems, is against anything so final as fundamental right or goodness. On the other hand, the finality implied in "fundamental right and goodness" would seem to leave no place for an ethical system.

However, each of these sources of authority may have a valid field. When final right or goodness is known it must be accepted as unalterable. But until final right and goodness are known in every sphere and at every point, man must follow such ethical systems as seem right and best to him; he cannot wait for moral direction until final authority be established. Furthermore, until man is able to see an act in its entirety his judgment of it must come short of the exact measurement of fundamental right and goodness.

Therefore, he is under necessity of having his system even though he firmly believes that morals and religion are founded upon final authority. An ethical system has authority and should be obeyed, not primarily because of its own rightness, but because of the fundamental authority upon which it rests, or from which it sprang; so Paul declared to the Roman Church. (Rom. 13:1-7.)

The tendency of ethical standards to be forever changing is often used in argument against the possibility of any fundamental authority. But this tendency to change indicates that there is a final standard toward which all changes trend. Most of us have experienced changes in our ethical conceptions; but dependence upon our present ethical standards is not seriously weakened by knowledge of this fact. Our "measure of a man" may be quite different from what it once was, but still the man is either good or bad. We may even have suffered moral changes which we are willing to admit are for the worse; yet we are willing to accept that the good and the bad and right and wrong are distinct categories. Such judgments rest upon what, to the one making them, is an authoritative foundation.

Spiritual Forces

Since spiritual forces exert so large an influence in man's life, we would know more about them. Can they be controlled, directed? Are they to be trusted? Yes, to these questions. The answer is based on the belief that

There are fundamental and unvarying spiritual forces, which function according to definite, discoverable laws, available for man's uses.

To discover these forces, learn their laws, and make use of them in everyday living, we must have an accurate standard of measurement.

A Spiritual Measuring Line

Once in making answer to a lawyer of the Pharisees Jesus summarized man's moral and religious obligations: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind"; and "thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." (Matt. 22:37, 39.) This succinct statement of man's spiritual duty was drawn from two different books of the Old Testament, Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18. To this standard Jesus made one addition, brief, yet transforming: Love as I have loved you.

Neither ethics nor religion has developed a higher standard than this. By running this measuring line back along the course of history, then placing it over the spiritual life of to-day, and projecting it into the future, we may discover if it is possible to conclude whether or not the action of spiritual force is uniform and follows definite laws. This process will also enable us to compare this "measuring line" with other ethical and spiritual standards and should thereby help us to determine its accuracy as a spiritual norm.

Universal Spiritual Law

Are spiritual laws as fixed and absolute as physical laws? Will meeting their requirements produce as definite results as, for example, are achieved when the requirements of the laws of electricity are met with? Many to-day think that standards in both morals and religion are matters of convention, the result of the "passing stress of circumstance."[2] With our ever-increasing multiplicity of laws there is increasing lawlessness, due, at least in part, to a growing belief that there is no absolute standard of right and wrong; therefore one's standard can lay as much claim to authority as another's.

Moral sanctions of the past rested upon belief in fixed standards of right and wrong. When an African tribe murdered twins at their birth it was, according to its moral standard, doing a righteous act in ridding the tribe of monstrosities with unlimited power for evil. The doctrine of the divine right of kings was not held by kings alone, but was also accepted and fought for by subjects, however much they had suffered under the tyranny of their sovereigns.

The discarding of some old doctrines has had the effect of weakening all moral sanctions. When a subject has been convinced that his king has done wrong he will discard *in toto* the doctrine that "the king can do no wrong." Very often one generation has found that the moral sanctions of the past will not stand

[2] Hudson, "The Truths We Live By," p. 3.

the strain of wider experience. But it is false logic to conclude that because some tenet in the doctrines of our fathers was wrong their virtues are not worth striving for. They found moral sanctions in which to ground great virtues; and though there may have been a few faulty stones in the foundations, both the foundations and the structures they reared thereon stood secure. Youth who to-day are rushing headlong into hedonism, because all "the old fogies are wrong with their foolish requirements and prohibitions," will scarcely find foundation for character so fine and for accomplishment so worthy as were achieved by those they scorn.

Character grows from the spiritual elements supplied to it. Those who follow the Epicurean philosophy of pleasure as the chief good will develop character similar to the characters of those who followed this philosophy of self-gratification in the past. Those who seek to fulfill their duty to God and to man will to-day develop characters similar to the character of those who in the past set themselves courageously to such high tasks. Doubtless underneath most of the old moral sanctions, even some which cannot now be supported in their entirety, there was truth which can be built into new standards for our day. Without disproof it is logical to believe that spiritual force moves as unvaryingly through the spiritual realm as the sun moves through the physical realm. A corollary of such a belief would be that spiritual law is universal.

Coexistent with, and often as insistent as, his physi-

cal desires have been man's spiritual desires. Had there been no fundamental reason for them it seems that they would long ago have been abandoned. If these desires are inherent, their foundation must be as permanent and enduring as the foundation for the desire for food. Standards which would lead to the satisfying of these desires would aid in man's development and in bringing him happiness and in so doing would lead to security and peace. When the laws of the solar system were learned, all fear that the sun would fail to rise was ended.

There must be a "normal" spiritual state as well as a "normal" physical state. We are learning more and more about the laws of health, and our usefulness and happiness are being greatly increased thereby. Spiritual health seems equally as important as physical health. If the reign of law is as universal in the spiritual realm as it is in the physical realm, unlimited beneficial results may be obtained by living and working in harmony with the law.

CHAPTER I

DIFFICULTIES

A Multiplicity of Standards

It would be difficult to name any age in which there were not numbers of "final" spiritual measuring lines valiantly defended by discoverers and adherents. In fact, there are few to-day who are not fairly well satisfied with their own standards of measurements for moral and religious matters. It is a case of having too many "final" standards in a sphere where no standard is universally recognized as being final.

The Existence of Such a Standard Denied

Critics and scholars assert that no such spiritual standard is discoverable in the teachings of Jesus. Says Foster: "Besides . . . so sternly must we remonstrate with our opponents—to erect, independently of experience, the sayings of Jesus into a norm of life for every time and place is immoral, since it tends to destroy the originality, certitude, and autonomy of the mortal." [1]

Nor are critics and scholars the only ones who know nothing of moral and religious standards backed by final authority. A large number inside the Church and out, who are neither critics nor dogmatists, go their way in almost entire unconcern as to whether or not

[1] Foster, "The Finality of the Christian Religion," p. 515.

there be religious or moral standards other than what they themselves choose to follow.[2] And this when people are both as moral and as religious as they ever were! And when ethical and religious standards are quite as high as they ever were!

The Historical-Critical Study of the New Testament

Says Professor Moffatt: "The historical-critical study of the New Testament has cast doubt upon many of the reputed acts and teachings of Jesus."[3] So painstakingly earnest have been the critics in clearing away the "rubbish" from the gospel story that in many places they have left little more than ash heaps. The Puritan could place his finger upon a Bible text, declare its teaching, and call the world—and himself—to arise to its absolute standard. To-day, the student reads that same passage in the light of critical findings and "knows" it never meant to teach what the Puritan was so positive it did. Perhaps, even, it is an interpolation!

In viewing the havoc wrought among old doctrines many conservative churchmen have wanted to throw out bodily historical criticism. But in the main historical criticism renders valuable service. The injury done by this method has been due to its abuse, not to its use. But because its abuse is not easily distin-

[2] Ellwood, "The Reconstruction of Religion," p. 12.

[3] Moffatt, "The Approach to the New Testament," Chapter 5, especially pp. 131ff.

guishable from its use, it becomes quite often destructive, especially in the hands of the unskilled. Even when the results of historical criticism are helpful and will ultimately enrich spiritual life and thought, they often bring cherished beliefs into question before the believer is able to adjust his faith to the new interpretation. When a believer has been compelled to look upon the collapse of one of the trusted pillars of his faith he may look with uneasiness upon all the others. When any great number of people have had such an experience, it increases the difficulty of having any standard accepted.

The greatest difficulties arising from the use of this method come from the work of irresponsible and untrained persons who have no deep interest in the truths with which they are working. Such persons, eager to make a name for themselves, or to do something different, have done much to discredit the valuable work of faithful and earnest men. We would that all who use this method were as careful as Professor Pfleiderer indicated to his class that he wished to be. "We will guard carefully against committing the error so widespread to-day of reading into the Biblical documents something which they do not contain, and of putting aside everything which they do contain that is not entirely agreeable to our modern manner of thinking. It is in such fashion that the well-known Jesus romances originate, shooting up like mushrooms from the ground; we may well grant those poets the privilege

of doing such work, but they ought not to lay claim to the credit of telling actual history." [4]

Differences between Christians

Christianity reveals differences within itself almost as great as those which exist between Christians and non-Christians.[5] Greek Catholicism and Roman Catholicism, while holding substantially the same doctrines, differ vastly in interpretation and application. In the Greek Church—the oldest Church of Christianity—"Christianity is conceived physically rather than ethically, as a new divine nature, immortal and incorruptible, of which one becomes partaker through the sacraments, and by the possession of which one is delivered from the corruption of this world and assured of a life of endless bliss hereafter." [6] The pageantry and splendor of some of the festivals of the Greek Church surpass everything else known as a Christian service,[7] and perhaps any service of any religion. Its doctrines, though less developed, are in most instances more subtle and metaphysical than the doctrines of the Roman Church, in which all doctrines and dogmas are subordinated to the dogma of the Church. With the Roman Catholic "to be a good Christian means to

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[4] "Religion and Historic Faiths," p. 252.

[5] See Harnack, "What Is Christianity?" last three lectures; Sabatier, "Philosophy of Religion," Chapter 3.

[6] Brown, "The Essence of Christianity," p. 70.

[7] "What Is Christianity?" Crown Theological Library Edition, pp. 233ff.

be a submissive son of Mother Church, receiving at her hand whatever she may be pleased to impart."[8]

But the differences between these two branches of Catholics appear insignificant when either is compared with the Quakers.[9] The foundation doctrines of the Greek and Roman Churches are largely repudiated by the followers of George Fox. The Quakers deny the Greek doctrine of union with Christ physically through the sacraments; and they repudiated the Roman doctrine of union with Christ through the dogma of the Church. While the Greek Catholics are observing the sacraments in order to partake of the divine nature, the Friends partake of no sacrament at all, believing that Baptism and the Lord's Supper are inward and spiritual. While the Romans find within their Church all their spiritual requirements, the Quakers find full satisfaction for all their spiritual needs through their realization of and fellowship with the "Light within."

Within Protestantism there are vast differences. Contrast the dignified, formal, ritualistic service of the Protestant Episcopal Church—having its stipulated lesson for every day of the year, its formal prayers, its carefully prepared, beautiful form for every service, its impressive, stereotyped architecture in chapel

[8] "Essence of Christianity," p. 71.

[9] See Writings of George Fox, particularly his "Journal." The central point of his doctrine is the direct responsibility of each soul to God. Because of their belief in the immanence of the Holy Spirit in all men the Quakers refused to doff their hats to nobility, had no written creeds, rejected music and external aids to religion, and substituted a baptism of repentance for water baptism.

and cathedral—with a Salvation Army street meeting, or with a service in a rescue mission. The sacred precinct of the Episcopalian pulpit is closed to all save those who have received ordination at the hands of a bishop; while a religious service in the mission is often conducted by workers none of whom have received any sort of commission from Church or man.

Similarities between Christianity and Other Religions

There are many similarities between Christianity and other religions. How may we account for these similarities if there is one final standard for all? "Is Christianity monotheism? So is Mohammedanism. Does it present a lofty ethical standard? The same is true of Confucianism. Does it offer salvation to the sinful and the needy? Judaism also is a religion of redemption. Does it assert a universal authority? The claim of Buddhism is not less sweeping."[10] These similarities have given rise to various pan-religious movements,[11] one of the most notable of which was the World's Parliament of Religions at the Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893.

The rigid exclusiveness of Christianity has been repellant to other faiths from the first. Might the good points of all religions be combined to form a universal religion? But Christianity claims to be a universal religion as it is. Might a step toward such univer-

[10] "Essence of Christianity," page 296.

[11] *Ibid.*, p. 291.

sality be taken by combining the essential conceptions of deity in the various religions into one all-inclusive conception? But Christians claim that their God is Father of all mankind. Must all people then accept the Christian faith in order to gain the fullest spiritual life? Would spiritual power flow as freely if conditions were met with outside of Christianity?

Though these are real problems, they will appear less formidable if we rest in the knowledge that when fundamental truth is arrived at and clarified it is recognized alike by those approaching it from different directions. Truth is always more important than the paths by which it is reached. In the career of Mahatma Gandhi, of India, we have a suggestion as to how these problems may finally reach solution. In an article in the *Christian Century,* April 19, 1923, Sherwood Eddy gave interesting information concerning the relation of Gandhi's ethics to the teachings of Jesus: "Gandhi is frankly a Hindu and states his belief in the Hindu scriptures. He says: 'The central fact of Hinduism is cow protection. . . . Protection of the cow means protection of the whole dumb creation of God.' But Gandhi has drawn his chief inspiration from the teachings of Christ. He wrote: 'I believe the Bible, the Koran, and the Zend-Avesta to be as much divinely inspired as the Vedas.' Of the Bible he said: 'There have been many times when I did not know which way to turn. But I have gone to the Bible, and particularly to the New Testament, and have drawn strength from its message.' Mr. Gandhi states frankly

that he got his idea of turning the other cheek in passive resistance from Matthew 5:39, and probably no living man has so vividly and dramatically exemplified the spirit of vicarious suffering before the whole world in our day as Mr. Gandhi. Dr. F. B. Meyer (since deceased), after a long conservation with him, is reported to have said, 'Mr. Gandhi. I look upon you as a Christian, and as such I give you my hand.' "

Different Views Held by Scholars

The opinions of scholars have great weight, and when they disagree radically confusion results. Scholars disagree as to methods of procedure in the spiritual realm quite as often as they differ over results. Often scholars who have reached similar conclusions in this realm have moved along widely different paths. An illustration is the two schools holding the non-historicity of Jesus. One school reached the conclusion that Jesus never existed by explaining all the stories about him as myths.[12] Another school holds that all such stories are mere fabrications of the founders of Christianity.[13]

Equally confusing is the fact that scholars following practically the same paths reach widely different conclusions. Extreme socialistically-minded Christians

[12] See Loofs, "Truth about Jesus," First Lecture; "Problem of Ot," p. 157.

[13] For full discussion of this and the above reference see Arthur Drews, "The Christian Myth," and Thoburn, "The Mystical Interpretation of the Gospels."

declare that the ethical teachings of Jesus were meant solely for society and set Jesus forth as the first socialist.[14] Other workers in the same field conclude that Jesus had in mind the development of character in the individual, and not primarily the establishing of ethics in society.[15]

An almost endless number of similar differences between scholars might be catalogued. But it should be remembered that two persons following the same standard are not compelled to walk in the same footsteps. The polestar is an equally accurate guide to travelers on land or sea, or from opposite positions on the globe. A standard which will lead to perfection in morals and religion must be far enough above the uneven surface of life to be seen by all travelers whatever their position.

Differences between Bible Students

To the outsider, in particular, it is confusing when different groups of earnest students take the same Bible, and perhaps the same commentaries and helps, but formulate vastly different doctrines and practices. Then between theologian and layman there is an ever-increasingly widening gulf. The layman reads the Bible and interprets it in the light of practical everyday experience. Even though he listen attentively to a theological explanation, he holds to his own interpretation. There are still laymen devotedly attached

[14] See Rauschenbusch, "Christianizing the Social Order."

[15] "What Is Christianity?" p. 121.

to the doctrines of their own Church, but the general tendency is toward individual interpretation along practical lines. The rigid theologian, however, and we still have many such, interprets the Bible chiefly through the mediums of doctrines and dogmas.

Differences between Scholars and Theologians

The mere statement of views held by rationalists and by "fundamentalists" shows how vastly far apart men can be who claim alike the right to bear the name Christian. Permit Prof. Kirsopp Lake to speak for the rationalists: "It is therefore impossible for educated men, even among those who sincerely adopt it, to settle a moral argument by an appeal to the teaching of Jesus."[16] The "fundamentalist" believes in the plenary inspiration of the Bible—that every word of the Bible in the original was inspired—the literal interpretation of the Scriptures; the historical accuracy of all recorded miracles; and some of the more extreme of these would deny Christian fellowship to those who do not agree with them in detail. Those who approach the problem of extending the Christian faith from the standpoint of the scholars rest their hope in educating people into the faith. At the other extreme are Christians who hold that faith is a matter of personal experience arrived at through belief in Jesus; and they may even look upon education and

[16] Introduction to "Painted Windows," p. 5.

teaching as being hindrances rather than a help to such belief.

Differences between Scientist and Theologian

While there are theologians who are also scientists, and scientists who are interested in, and kindly disposed toward, theology, these different schools of thought have usually been in different camps. The theologian is often unwilling to permit the scientist to enter what he considers his particular realm. The fact that he has had to yield to the scientist in the fields of cosmology, biology, astronomy, and elsewhere, has made the theologian more than ever tenacious of his present positions in religion and morals; while the scientist, fresh from his numerous victories in other fields, rushes in with all his paraphernalia, measuring lines, and laws, and sets about "conquering" the spiritual realm, with a superb confidence in his ability to reduce everything to his own equations.

This contest between scientist and theologian has done much to clarify the spiritual atmosphere and to solve the problems over which they have struggled often without vindicating either side. We have traveled far since the time when Galileo was compelled to make his regular recantations before Church authorities. We have learned also that the spiritual realm is dependent neither for its fact nor for its laws upon the physical realm. These realms may and do support each other, but neither can displace the other. Clarifying the atmosphere and defining the fields have done

much to aid in the discovery of spiritual "measuring lines." Whatever its relation to the physical realm, it is established that spiritual force is manifested primarily in the realm of conduct, ideals, and aspirations. It molds the character that modifies physical conditions and builds social institutions. If in accomplishing these results it functions according to definite laws, both the scientist and the theologian should be able to understand and use it.

Separation between Ethics and Religion

There is an ever-widening gap between ethics and religion. Religion completely dominated the life of primitive man.[17] His government, his home life, his social life, his sex life, his personal life were all intimately connected with his religion. The ethical codes of Egypt, of Babylonia, and of Israel were religious. This intimate relationship between ethics and religion continued down through medieval times. To-day they are widely separate, sometimes antagonistic. One social interest after another has separated itself from religion: government, politics, industry, science, education, family life, personal character, and even morality itself is sometimes thought of and treated separately from religion.

Some of the zeal with which various interests have sought divorcement from religion has been due to tyranny practiced in the name of religion. It has never

[17] For discussion of non-religious origin of morals see Leuba, "A Psychological Study of Religion," pp. 195-203.

been easy to distinguish between religion and forms of religion. Religious liberty was born out of a desire to get free from religious forms rather than out of any effort to be free from moral obligations. But after it was once established that one group of people should not be compelled to submit to the religious beliefs of another group, it was inevitable that religious requirements and moral obligations should continue to separate. When Church and State separated, the gap between religion and morals widened. The State must have a system of ethics so when it no longer submitted to the system held by the Church it was under the necessity of formulating and adopting a system of its own.

However, there must be a foundation for ethics when separate from religion. Either right must be right because society, or some group, says it is right; or right must be right because it is right. But neither ethics nor religious form can create moral right. A closer examination shows that neither an ethical system nor a religious form has the power to make or to change a moral right or a religious verity. The separation, then, which has been noted, and concerning which much is said in these days, is between ethics and religious forms. Between morals and religion there may be the closest union. After a brief discussion of this subject Professor Wright says: "To sum up the relation of morailty to religion, we may say that all religious values are moral values in the sense that they are socially recognized; but that not all moral values

are religious values. Not even all the values that are morally most important, either from our standpoint or from that of the worshipers of the religion under consideration, are religious values. However, it must be added that, as civilizations and religions develop, the values which religion endeavors to conserve increasingly tend to coincide with the highest moral values that are known at the time; and that this has been conspicuously true in the history of Christianity and Judaism."[18]

There is nothing to indicate that Jesus Christ ever conceived the possibility of anything being morally right that was religiously wrong, or religiously right that was morally wrong. His teaching cannot be divided into moral and religious, though he taught on every moral and religious subject: government, social life, sex life, personal life, and man's relation to God. Religion never absolves from moral obligations; nor, as instanced by his advice to the rich young ruler, is morality in any sense a substitute for religion. Indeed, this incident shows that Jesus considered that morals and religion at their highest are united. Jesus prefaced his remarks to the rich young ruler about selling his goods and giving the money to the poor with the statement: "If thou wouldst be perfect."

Deductions

1. These various differences and difficulties show that the sought-for spiritual laws have not been dis-

[18] "A Student's Philosophy of Religion," p. 56.

covered, rather than that there are no spiritual laws and standards.

2. Granting that there often is in controversies what Dr. Jacks, in his "Religious Perplexities," calls the will-to-disbelieve, yet earnest and continued controversy is evidence that fundamental truth exists, but in the controverted field it has not yet been clarified.

3. Being is not static, but active. Therefore codified ethics cannot be final for morals, nor can doctrinal statements set forth the sum total of religion. Living precludes the possibility of any solution which does not allow for the action of spiritual force upon life. Moral and religious difficulties and perplexities grow out of unescapable changes connected with being. That some deny that they possess the common desire to explain the mystery of being does not matter.

CHAPTER II

ENCOURAGEMENTS

In spite of all the difficulties and problems, our modern, sophisticated, somewhat cynical world is interested in religion.[1] Though old forms have been sloughed off, and old shibboleths laughed out of court, yet, perhaps, religion was never more vitally and hopefully alive than it is to-day. The difficulties and obstacles have done much to break up the spiritual stream into many little rivulets, but spiritual force flows on. And it is the same stream whose source we discover back in the dawn of human history.

Herein lies one of the greatest encouragements to the belief that spiritual force is under definite laws, and that through conformity to these laws desirable results can be achieved in character and in society.

Continuity in Morals

From the first trace in history, as has already been suggested, morals have had to do with human character and with human acts. The questions always have been:

1. Is a man good, or bad?
2. Is an act right, or wrong?

Through the centuries the spiritual measuring lines

[1] Cf. Lyman, "The Experience of God in Modern Life," p. 1.

in the realm of morals have not changed, though conceptions put into these standards have varied greatly. It seems altogether improbable that the time will ever come when these standards will not be applied as they have been in the past and are now. The changes will doubtless be in the direction of finding foundations for morals and in learning the laws which govern the spiritual force which is in morals.

Continuity in Religion

Religion likewise shows uniformity and continuity throughout the long course of history. Religion, in all forms in which it is found to-day, is threefold:

1. It is cosmogonic; it seeks to explain the universe.
2. It is mystical; it seeks knowledge of and union with God, or Creative Force.
3. It is ethical; it has to do with man's relation to his fellow beings.

Almost as far back as we can trace it, religion had this threefold nature. True, all the conceptions of primitive man were crude; but his religion had in it desires and aspirations similar to those which move the race to-day. However uncharted the stream of spiritual force may be, wherever we come upon it we find that it is always flowing in one direction. Forms of religion differ vastly from age to age, from country to country, and, as we have seen, between people of the same culture and attainments in a given community. But religion everywhere seeks to explain causation; to bring knowledge of, or contact with,

deity; and to conserve the ethical values of society. Therefore, though the forms of religion are numerous, the spiritual force which moves upon man, impelling him to be religious, is one.

Jesus Announces a Spiritual Standard

In answer to a question from one of his troubled disciples concerning the spiritual realm, Jesus said: "I am the way, the truth, and the life." (John 14:6.) However much he wished his disciples to understand by this figurative language, it is plain that he wished them to understand that there are definite ways and standards by which spiritual ends may be attained. Jesus proceeded at all times with the confident assurance of one following a sure path to a certain goal.

Such Standards Found in Physical Science

Measuring lines such as we seek are found in physical science, and in all spheres where investigation has arrived at fundamental truth. Scientists enter each new field confident that they will find dependable standards and laws with which to work. Much has been learned about electricity since Franklin launched his "loaded kite" into the clouds, and much is yet to be learned. But fundamental laws of electricity have not changed. Scientists proceed with their investigations with the assurance that it will continue to function as it has been known to function in the past.

Failure to discover any such definite principles in the spiritual realm should not be discouraging. For

seventeen years Kepler worked out and discarded theories of solar ellipsis, rejoicing every time he found an error in one of his theories, because the discovering of the error brought him a step nearer to the goal he sought. His nineteen futile theories of planetary orbits made possible a correct theory the twentieth time.

Analogies between phenomena of the physical world and phenomena of the spiritual world have been overworked; but analogies exist. The parables of Jesus show how forcefully they may be used in presenting spiritual truth.

Morals and Religion Universal

The spiritual streams are not only continuous, but morals and religion are apparently universal. However much progress morals and religion have made, they are not essentially different from those of primitive man. The same impulses which led primitive man to seek deity led millions at home and on the battle fields during the World War to seek help from their God. Primitive man often forgot his deity when danger and need were passed; and many of the praying millions of wartime soon neglected their God, or even doubted his power to help.

Morals and religion at the beginning were intimately related,[2] if not inseparably connected. Some distingush between fetishism and religion;[3] others between

[2] Pfleiderer, "Religion and Historic Faiths," pp. 34-46; Pratt, "The Religious Consciousness," pp. 7, 8ff.

[3] Jevons, "Introduction to the Study of Comparative Religion," pp. 126, 136, 137.

primitive man's individualistic conception of deity[4] and the present-day social conception of religion. However, there is substantial agreement that morals and religion are universal.

Religious needs seem always to have been the same. Man would know God[5] and his will for the individual and the race. Morals have always separated the good from the bad and showed what was right and what was wrong. This uniformity suggests laws and standards; perhaps one comprehensive, universal standard.[6]

Desire for Immortality

The desire for immortality seems to be well near, if not quite, universal.[7] However this desire originated, it is deep-seated, and to satisfy it many have been willing to make unlimited sacrifices. Every legitimate craving of life seems to have adequate satisfaction.[8] Hope for an adequate satisfaction for this soul craving appears reasonable. If such satisfaction is obtainable, it is logical to expect it to be had in one universal way rather than by many ways.

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[4] Ames, "Psychology of Religious Experience," pp. 168, 169.

[5] See W. L. Davidson, "Recent Theistic Discussion," for discussion of the possibility of knowing God and proving him.

[6] Cf. F. Clark, "The Ten Great Religions."

[7] Cf. Wright, "A Student's Philosophy of Religion," Chapter 22; cf. Hudson, "The Truth We Live By," pp. 119ff.

[8] "The existence of the object as real is implied in the actual existence of the want of it." ("Recent Theistic Discussion," p. 29.) See also "The Moral Life and Religion," by Ten Broeke, p. 221.

Inner Consciousness of Christians

Christians of all ages have held similar views as to the nature and the worth of spiritual life. The striking uniformity of Christianity through nineteen centuries, and in vastly different environments, is far more remarkable than its differences. Christianity has not been kept thus by a dynastic head, nor by any set of laws or outward forms. It has maintained an inner unity in the face of mighty forces making for diversity. Further, Christianity has not been improved by the interpretations since apostolic times; accretions have clouded rather than clarified. The centuries since Christ have brought no improvement upon his presentation of religion and morals. His statements concerning God and the moral law satisfy Christians today. "These assertions of faith are repeated, often in a new shape, through all the centuries of the Christian era, not because people simply repeated what the apostles had said, but because their inner voice recognized the claims of Jesus as claims of the holy God."[9]

Absence of Disproof of Fixed Spiritual Standards

Much that has passed as Biblical criticism may well be called destructive criticism.[10] The works of such critics largely refute each other. A saner, more tol-

[9] Loofs, "What Is the Truth about Jesus Christ?" p. 209.

[10] Cf. James Orr, "The Bible Under Trial," for a rather complete canvass of the work of men who might be termed destructive critics.

erant and constructive criticism is setting aside much of that which was destructive. But after the most serious onslaughts it was possible to wage against it, Christianity remains fundamentally the same.

Union of Religion and Morals

The association of morals and religion which has been necessary in our treatment, and which will continue to be necessary, suggests that they may have a common spiritual foundation. There could not be a final standard governing man's relations with God which would conflict with a final standard governing his relations with society. Man's religious and social obligations so overlap that if they were controlled by separate spiritual standards it would seem that they must sooner or later come into conflict.

What actually happens is that the higher religion and morality rise, the more intimately they are related. We have already quoted Professor Wright to the effect that as civilization and religion develop the values of religion and morals increasingly tend to coincide.[11] This tendency indicates that at their highest they will be found to have one common standard, or common standards.

History furnishes abundant proof that the separation of morals and religion is not wholesome. Whenever man has put his religion outside of his morals his morals have deteriorated. An early prophet of Israel saw that religion could not be separated from

[11] Chapter 1, p. 32.

morals and still be worth anything as religion. Assuming that God was speaking through him, he said: "I desire goodness, and not sacrifice." (Hos. 6:6.) On the other hand, when the gods became immoral, as was the case with the gods of the Greeks, religion lost all power over the people. People have always demanded a high morality in their gods.

Practical Spiritual Attainments

However limited our knowledge of spiritual laws, we know that spiritual force functions according to spiritual standards. Each separate and distinct religious movement has standards and measuring lines which developments and achievements within the movement follow. A child reared in a Mohammedan home will become a different person from what he would have been if he had had Christian training. A child with Greek-Catholic training will be different at maturity from what he would have been had his early training been received in a Methodist home. The Sunday school and the Christian Endeavor movement are non-creedal, non-doctrinal, non-denominational movements. But these movements have clearly defined standards; and they move forward certainly, producing definite, anticipated results.

Psychology helped to accomplish desired spiritual results during the period of the World War through the medium of spiritual laws. At the opening of the great conflict America as a nation was opposed to war as a means of settling international disputes. A small mi-

nority in the nation looked upon war as inevitable and believed that America would have to have her part in it. But this minority could not by argument have won the majority to this view. Nevertheless, between the time of our entrance into the war and the landing of American troops on European soil something took place within the nation which made her almost solidly for the war program. This change was wholly spiritual, and the standard for the movement of spiritual force in bringing about the change was the uniting of the physical and spiritual forces of the nation for the well-being of the world. It does not matter that some deny that this was the reason why America entered the war: this was the spiritual standard which produced the marvelous morale in the nation and made America's contribution possible.

The practical worth of right spiritual standards—wrong spiritual standards also produce definite results—are on every hand. School spirit, community spirit and enterprise, patriotism, religious devotion, family pride, loyalty, honor, business integrity, and all that keeps life at its best are spiritual values; and are moved forward by spiritual force functioning according to definite laws. We can achieve the results we desire in these practical spheres when we know the principles and standards by which these laws function.

When we say that a man is good, or that he is bad, we are thinking of his spiritual attainment. When we say that he does right, or that he has done wrong, we are thinking of his reaction to spiritual motives. Our

very judgments assume that there are standards, and that the man is responsible for his choice of the standard which has led him to his present spiritual position.

Deduction

Spiritual law is as natural and as universal as physical law, and its operation produces definite results. Man can know spiritual law and can thereby direct spiritual force to achieve desired ends in his own character and in society.

CHAPTER III

THE LAW OF CONTINUITY

A SURVEY of the history of ethics and religion shows that they have had many standards; it reveals also that a "law of continuity" can be traced through these various standards. Looked at in one way, this may mean little more than that human beings have always acted like human beings. Viewed from another angle, it may aid in the discovery of the standard by which spiritual force may be controlled and directed into channels for greatest usefulness. A stone fastened at the end of a stick was one of man's first weapons. Through the long process of weapon-making there have been many standards and great changes; but Big Bertha, the Germans' giant gun which threw shells into Paris, seventy-five miles away, one of the latest achievements, was fundamentally the same as the weapon fashioned by primitive man. A law of continuity runs through; and, however differently weapons may be fashioned in the future, this law will be discoverable in them.

The similarities between the ethical systems and the religions of different ages and different lands are remarkable. These similarities are accounted for in different ways, and different conclusions are drawn from them. But the indication is that a law of continuity runs through, and similarities exist, because man is

fundamentally religious and fundamentally moral. The differences are due to man crossing and recrossing the path of spiritual force in his efforts to arrive at the perfect standard: the similarities are due to striking the unvarying path as he has crossed and recrossed it.

The study of history should give guides for spiritual progress; it cannot give goals. The goal for spiritual progress is somewhere out beyond man, since the spiritual force which has animated man through the centuries is not of man's making. It may ever remain as unexplained as the biological life force still is; but a force it certainly is, and its results are known through the revelations of history. Professor Pfliederer says of history: "It contains the signs and guides of the eternal, but not the final and the highest at which we ought to stop."[1] The law of continuity which history shows to be running through morals and religion may not guide to a final standard in these realms. The fact that it runs through all discovered norms may indicate that it will continue to run through discoverable norms or standards and abide in none of them. However, the law of the continuity of spiritual force has value even if it does not lead to a final standard which will always produce sure spiritual results. It shows that there are fundamental and unvarying spiritual forces which function according to definite laws. If the final standard is not discovered, it is helpful to know that the forces continue to function for man's good.

[1] Preface to "Christian Origins," p. 5.

Henotheism

Max Müller gave to the earliest form of religion the name Henotheism. Professor Pfleiderer fixes the name for original religion, "naïve-patriarchal Henotheism."[2] At this stage religious conceptions are very crude. The main characteristic is a tribal deity who is concerned for his tribe alone, and to whom each member of the tribe owes allegiance. This early religion was not spiritual, in the sense that we use spiritual. The god was the unexplained force in the sun, wind, trees, streams, or in other phenomena about them. It was not moral[3] as we use moral to distinguish between right and wrong. If it had a cosmology, it was crude and undefined. We discover in it no fixed goals for race progress. The god had no interest in the individual as an individual, but solely as a part of the tribe. Should the individual be separated from his tribe, he would thereafter expect ill rather than good from the god he had formerly looked to for aid.

But even in this crude, tribal religion there is much of the fundamental content of religion. Henotheism bound the tribe to a force outside it; a deity who was concerned for the welfare of the tribe, to whom the

[2] "Religion and Historic Faiths," p. 81.

[3] Galloway, "The Philosophy of Religion," p. 195, holds that earliest religion was potentially moral in that it was associated with elements out of which ethics grew.

tribe could go for help; and it formed a social tie which held the tribe together.[4]

Polytheism

In point of time it was a long step from Henotheism, tribal religion, to Polytheism, national religion, though it was a very simple step when the time came to take it. Babylonia makes a good subject for the study of Polytheism. Their religion in its earliest form was tribal. Gradually the tribes were welded into a nation, and the tribal gods were placed in a pantheon, and to different gods were ascribed different powers.[5] The gods became persons, with definite traits of character, with whom the people could enter into personal relations. These gods were not concerned with the national life, but were interested in the physical and moral well-being of the individual. Their religion became crystallized into a written code of morals, written prayers, psalms, and hymns. A morning hymn addressed to Shamash, the sun god, gives insight into their moral and religious standards:

> "O Lord, illuminator of darkness, who reveals the face (of heaven?);
> Merciful god, who lifts up the lowly, and protects the weak.
> To thy light all great gods look up.

[4] "The Philosophy of Religion," p. 109. "In rudimentary form we have here the idea of a norm for human wills which all accept for the good of all."

[5] For extended treatment see Hastings' Bible Dictionary, Extra Vol., p. 531ff., article, "Religion of Babylonia."

All the annunki look up to thee.
All mankind thou guidest like a single being.
Expectantly with raised head they look up to the sunlight.
When thou dost appear, they rejoice and exult.
Thou art the light for the most distant ends of the heavens,
The standard for the wide earth.
The multitudes look up to thee with joy."

The deity here has mercy, sympathy, protecting and guiding love, and worshipers approach their god with joy. The cosmology looks far beyond the waving of a leaf or the flowing of a stream. In a prayer of King Nebuchadnezzar to Marduk their cosmological conceptions are set forth yet more clearly, and the note of intimate personal relation between man and deity is accentuated:

O Eternal Ruler, lord of all, grant that the name of the king whom thou lovest, whose name thou hast named (called to the throne), may flourish as it seems good to thee. Lead him along the right path. I am the ruler who obeys thee, the creation of thy hand. Thou hast created me and hast intrusted me with the rulership over men. According to thy mercy, which thou grantest to all, O lord, let me love thy highest law. Plant in my heart the fear of thy divinity. Grant me all that may seem good to thee, for thou art he who guards my life.

A brief extract from a penitent's appeal to Ishtar sets forth another conception of their religion:

I, thy servant, full of sighs, call upon thee. The fervent prayer of him who has sinned dost thou accept. If thou lookest upon a man, that man lives, O powerful

mistress of mankind. Merciful one to whom it is good to turn, who accepts sighs.[6]

This shows knowledge of the problem of evil and a consciousness of personal sin. Also from the cuneiform inscriptions, from which the above extracts are quoted, we learn that the Babylonians believed in immortality.

Nothing that was found in Henotheism is absent in Polytheism. The Babylonian gods were concerned for the welfare of the tribes and the nation; and through allegiance to the deities a religious tie was formed which was the source of social unity. In addition to these two values, found also in Henotheism, Polytheism has a cosmology, with elaborate creation stories; a mystical conception of deity, the individual entering into direct spiritual communion with his gods, and definite moral standards. The most remarkable element in the Babylonian religion is this individual spiritual perception of deity. "Therewith, we stand before the decisive turn in the history of religion and turn from nature to spirit."[7]

Though in somewhat rudimentary form, Polythe-

[6] The religion of Babylonia is considered by many scholars to be the highest, after the Hebrew religion, of ancient religions. It covered a long period of time, and perhaps the cuneiform inscriptions and the Code of Hammurabi are of late development. Consequently, though one of the oldest religions, what we know of it is rather to be compared with later religions.

[7] Pfleiderer, "Religion and Historic Faiths," p. 133.

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BETHEL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

ism had at this early date all the essentials religion has ever attained.

1. It was cosmogonic, accounting for the universe.
2. It was mystical, bringing union between the individual and the gods.
3. It was ethical, having prescribed standards governing the relation between individuals and gods and standards for social relations.

Religion of State

The Religion of China is called a religion of State and is essentially polytheistic.[8] Briefly defined, it is a union of nature worship and ancestor worship. It centers in the Emperor, the son of Heaven, who has power to alter the position of the gods, to add new gods to the pantheon, and to revise the worship at will. It differs much from the religion of Babylonia; yet we find most of the essentials already discovered, and nothing contradictory.

The gods are concerned for the welfare of the people and can be approached by the people. The religion is spiritual, though of a low order of spirituality. Through the union of religion and state the social and ethical values are strongly emphasized. To this union

[8] "Worship is offered to heaven; to heavenly bodies, and to the weather-gods—cloud, rain, wind, thunder; to the regents of the seasons; to earth; to mountains, rivers, and seas; to the spirits of the soil and crops; to tutelary deities; to spirits of former sovereigns; and to the penates of the household." (Moore, "History of Religions," p. 6.) Pfleiderer, "Religion of Historic Faiths," p. 89, says: "The ancient Chinese religion is not actually a polytheistic national religion, for it lacks mythology as well as an organized priesthood."

are due the five thousand years of Chinese political history. The moral teachings, as set forth by Confucius, were intimately connected with religion and were of high order.

Buddhism

Buddhism, a variation of Polytheism, or, more accurately, a religious system which adapted itself to Polytheism, is very different from those discussed above. It is a religion of redemption; providing a way whereby man can extricate himself from the evil condition which naturally he is in, but apparently providing this way out of evil without the help of any god. This seems to wreck the possibility of universal spiritual law; for, if there is redemption without the help of deity in one case, when in other cases deity is essential to spiritual redemption, there can be no standard which applies to all cases.

Acceptance by Buddha of the Brahman gods does not indicate faith in these gods. These old gods were accepted by the new order as the best way to get rid of them. The four verities on which Buddha rests his teaching do not rest on deity. They are: (1) Suffering exists wherever sentient being exists. (2) The cause of suffering is desire, a craving for pleasure or existence. (3) Deliverance from suffering can be effected only by the extinction or "blowing out" of desire. (4) This cessation of suffering and entrance into Nirvana can be attained only by walking in the path of Buddha, or the Noble Eight-Fold Path. Add to this the fact that Buddhism was atheistic, regard-

less of their Brahman gods. Brinton says that Buddhism does not believe in gods, in the immortality of the soul, or in the divine government of the universe.[9]

The teaching of Buddha, who revolted against the excesses of the Brahman priesthood, are of less concern than what Buddhism became to its worshipers. Gautama Buddha, the founder, did not, as might have been expected, become a god. The doctrine soon arose that he was only one of the countless Buddhas who had appeared, and who would appear when there were suffering and need. Finally this doctrine came to teach that there is one original Buddha "who is considered the self-existing, eternal being, infinite light and life; that is to say, God in the full sense."[10]

In Japan, where Buddhism has reached its highest form, it is a "Polytheism of whose multitudinous gods they may obtain protection from tangible evils of this life and the satisfaction of their worldly desires, and by the efficacy of whose funeral rites they may escape the evils of the hereafter."[11]

Thus the faith started by a leader whose revulsion against existing religion carried him over into atheism is brought back to the normal by the practice of its worshipers. His followers, as by the working of an

[9] "Religions of Primitive Peoples," p. 28.

[10] "Religion and Historic Faiths," pp. 180, 181. Galloway, "The Philosophy of Religion," p. 142, says: "Popular Buddhism wandered far from the way of its founder: it even came to a heaven and hell, and rewards and punishments hereafter."

[11] "History of Religions," pp. 93f., 119, 120, 139ff.; Leuba, "A Psychological Study of Religion," p. 289.

inevitable law, returned to a belief in self-existing deities who exercise control over the universe, to whom the worshipers were bound, and who are the source of social and ethical benefits.

Kindred Religions

Hinduism and Zoroastrianism are religions of salvation, while the religion of Egypt and early Greek religions were polytheisms. Being such, they must have contained the essentials already discovered in kindred religions.

Monotheism: the Religion of Israel

Israel was the chief ancient exponent of monotheism, the religion which pointed to the possibility of a universal religion; and Israel became the early exponent of universal religion. Like the religion of Babylonia, the religion of Israel has had a long history. That it passed through the tribal and national stage before it reached the conception of a universal religion is certain.[12] In its earliest form it was tribal monotheism, for while Israel worshiped one God from the first, they long considered that the gods of their neighbors had power. In its earliest form the religion of Israel was:

Cosmogonic.
Mystical.
Ethical.

[12] See article, "Religion of Israel," Hastings' Bible Dictionary, Extra Vol., 613ff., for treatment of influences upon their religion, and for bibliography.

Thus as its beginning it had all the fundamental elements of religion. With Jehovah, the creator and controller of the universe, man can enter into spiritual communion. Jehovah speaks and Abraham hears. The tie is ethical in that the promise to Abraham is conditioned upon his obedience. The spiritual content of Israel's religion varied greatly during the centuries, reaching its greatest fullness during the prophetic period between the eighth and sixth centuries B.C.[13]

At its height the religion of Israel became universal, which it ever after remained; though Jehovah was always the peculiar God of his chosen people, and the only God of power. The Israelites granted the existence of other gods, which they considered but "wood and stone, the work of men's hands." The mass of the people never caught the vision of universality, but the prophets looked forward to the time when all nations would be gathered together before the Lord at Jerusalem.

At the peak period of Israel's religion we see clearly the union between morals and religion which always existed in this faith. "Thou delightest not in sacrifice; else would I give it: thou hast no pleasure in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." (Ps. 51: 16, 17.) Obligations to their fellow men were bonds which united them to Jehovah. Right and wrong are religious as well as moral values. "Will Jehovah be pleased with thousands of rams, or

[13] See Galloway, "Philosophy of Religion," p. 136.

with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth Jehovah require of thee, but to do justly, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with thy God?" (Mic. 6: 7, 8.)

It is significant to note that Israel's highest national attainment was contemporaneous with their periods of great moral and religious development. When the high tide of spiritual life ebbed their morals and religion declined, and with this decline their national glory diminished. Here we plainly see a relation between spiritual life and physical and temporal well-being. We see also that if there is a spiritual law of continuity it differs radically in operation from many such laws in the physical realm. The scientist assures us that "to understand what has happened, and even what will happen, we have only to examine what is happening."[14]

Suppose the test of what religion and morals were, what they had been, and what they would be had been taken at the time of Israel's spiritual ascending. This also was a time of religious ascending in other lands. Under the leadership of Zarathustra Persia had started on an upward spiritual movement a little before this time. Confucius had raised religion and morals to their flood tide in China in the sixth century. A little later India had its great awakening under the powerful preaching of Gautama Buddha. At this time Greece

[14] Conklin, "The Direction of Evolution," p. 7.

was being quickened by the preaching of a religion of redemption by the Orphic theologians. This was indeed a great period for spiritual progress, and it might have been possible to note a continuous upward trend of spiritual life force. But suppose the test had been made six hundred years later, when religion and morals were still going down a long decline. Then Zoroastrianism was practically extinct; Confucianism had been appropriated by ancestor worshipers; Buddhism was only a feature in the religion of hundreds of cults, and the morals Buddha had set forth had atrophied; in Greece religion was but one of many matters to be dealt with by philosophers, a theme for poets, or an attitude to assume toward deities; in Rome, the new mistress of the world, religion was largely an institution of state; and in Israel the once lofty spiritual religion had become flinty Pharisaism.

Plainly the law of spiritual continuity does not build upward step by step in undeviating progression, as ethical systems are built. If there is any spiritual continuity, it must be something different from a gradual unfolding, or a process of building from stage to stage.

If we examine the religion of Israel at the end of its six hundred years of decline, we discover that in spite of its degradation it still had the full intellectual content at which it had arrived at the height of its spiritual expression. When Jesus turned the question of a young lawyer of the Pharisees back upon the questioner, the lawyer declared that the substance of

the law was: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself." (Luke 10:27.) Man's first and highest duty was to God; his next great obligation was to his neighbor; and God was still a universal God.

But how different were the spiritual contents! The universal God was a terrible Judge to be feared by all who were not in ceremoniously proper relations with him: a God whose chief delight would be the destruction of all nations except righteous Israel. Their obligation to love their neighbor was ceremoniously performed according to minute specifications which compelled them to despise the "dogs" outside Israel. Cosmogonically their religion still contained all that it had achieved, though the Creator had performed his work for the special benefit of his chosen people. The beautiful mystical relation between Jehovah and his earth-children was lost; and the high moral teachings had been debased into unrighteous formalism.[15]

[15] Hastings' Bible Dictionary, see Extra Vol., pp. 272ff., article "Development of Doctrine in the Apocryphal Period," for discussion of the trend of Israel's religion and the influences upon it during the period of the nation's decline. While the doctors of the law still held the main intellectual concepts, the common people held only superstitious beliefs concerning God. Their general conclusion was that God cannot be known by human intelligence. The sacred name was pronounced but once a year by the high priest when he entered the Holy of Holies, and after Simon the Just was never pronounced. During the apocryphal period there were different sects and schools of thought colored by the religion of surrounding nations.

So, after all its promise, the stream of spiritual force seemed to be drying up. Was the supply diminishing at its source, or was the stream being absorbed without bringing about the results which had seemed to be promised? Then when the flow was at its lowest ebb came Jesus, and the stream burst forth with magnificent force.

Under the teaching of Jesus religion underwent its greatest change; but the change was mostly spiritual, though the intellectual concepts are forced to contain fuller meanings. Jehovah is still a universal God, Creator of all, and he is also Father of all: a God who is only spiritually discerned and spiritually loved. The relationship between Jehovah and his children, though fatherly and benevolent, is still mystical; yet it may become the most real experience of life. Good and bad, right and wrong are no longer terms for the legalists to twist and turn and juggle with, but stand for conditions and states of spiritual life. "A good tree cannot bear evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bear good fruit."

Jesus said that he came not to destroy, but to fulfill; yet in the fulfilling earlier conceptions were greatly altered. "This fulfilling of the idea of God did not consist in supplying foreign elements, but in developing, expanding, and clarifying the germs of doctrine which the Jewish people already possessed; and especially in rescuing their idea from certain prevalent misapplications and false inferences."[16] Religion with

[16] Stevens, "The Theology of the New Testament," p. 65.

Jesus was a means of bringing man into contact with a power outside him whereby man's strength would be greatly increased; and it was a bond which made one those of like mind and spirit. All the elements which were in the religion of Israel at its height were here. Indeed, he was recognized by friends and foes as a teacher sent from Jehovah. Their accusations against him were that he taught contrary to their law and misled the people.

The difference between Jesus as a teacher and other teachers was not great enough to account for the tremendous transformation he wrought in religion and morals. He did not add enough to the intellectual conceptions of religion to make it the different thing it became when he passed it on to others. The new that he gave to it was a new contact with life-giving spiritual force. His life became a channel through which spiritual power flowed at its fullest. His contribution is summed up in one of his own trenchant sayings: "I am the way." What he added to the religion and morals which he found was himself. Others had sought to standardize religion and morals; he vivified them. Though God was eternally the same, he would have men see him as they had not seen him and enter into a new life-giving relationship with him. Through this new relationship with God, he would have his followers become what none before him had ever been.

The stream of spiritual power which Jesus brought into full view was the same stream which had always

been flowing. Through his direction the stream produced more satisfying results in religion and morals than it had before. The continuity in morals and religion is a continuity of spiritual force rather than a continuity of ethical and religious systems. The differences in religion and in morals were the results of different standards rather than of a different spiritual force. In Jesus we have a standard quite different from the standards before his time: he put himself into the standard. Before his time morals and religion had for their standards precepts, commandments, and ceremonies. To these Jesus added sinless personality: a personality which had become a perfect channel for spiritual power through one man having lived the moral and religious life which met the highest spiritual requirements.

CHAPTER IV

CHRIST THE CENTER OF CHRISTIANITY

THE founders of Christianity, including Jesus Christ, the great head, were Jews, steeped in Jewish traditions, and adherents of the faith of Israel, who, in the best sense, were loyal to their traditions. The New Testament is esentially Jewish. The Hebraisms in the first two Gospels require explaining if anyone not a Jew is to understand them clearly. Luke and the author of John's Gospel were thoroughly familiar with Jewish thought and traditions, and any Jew could understand their writings. Paul suffered much at the hands of his fellow countrymen, yet he never ceased to proclaim that he was a Jew and that he cherished a desire to win the Jews. Christianity's heritage from Judaism is very great. But Christianity cannot be said to be an outgrowth of Judaism. Christianity incorporated Israel's highest moral and religious conceptions in a faith which was far more exalted than any the Jews ever knew.

Neither can Christianity be said to be an outgrowth of Christ's teachings, though his teachings are the fabric of this new way of life. Jesus put himself at the center of his system and announced that he was a channel—a way—through which flowed a spiritual dynamic essential to the Christianity he had come to establish. Other religions had attributed personalities

to their deities, but Jesus made personality a part of the standard for the functioning of spiritual power. When it flows through him spiritual power is at its greatest efficiency.

Jewish Ideas Transformed

The Messiah and the kingdom of God were ideas embodying two great Jewish hopes. The Messiah, promised by their prophets, was to be a redeemer king who, at his coming, would rule upon the throne of the great King David and would lead the nation forth to glory and world dominion. According to their conception, the kingdom of God would be the reëstablishment of David's great reign under the Messiah's leadership. During this reign Israel would come to supreme worldly power, and other nations would pay tribute to the government centered at Jerusalem.

Jesus claimed to be the fulfillment of the Messianic hope of Israel, and he announced at his coming that the kingdom of God was at hand. John Locke maintained that recognition of Jesus as Messiah is the distinctive element of Christianity.[1] We know that this was one of the early breaking points between the Jews and the followers of Jesus. Wright says: "The orthodox Jews regarded the movement of the followers of Jesus with horror. To them the claim that he was the Messiah appeared to be downright blasphemy of the worst kind."[2]

[1] See Works, Vol. 7. Locke makes belief in Jesus as the Messiah to be practically the sum and substance of Christian faith.

[2] "A Student's Philosophy of Religion," p. 155.

Jesus must have known the Jewish teaching about the Messiah, though his views differed so greatly. He believed that the Messiah was the necessary link between man and God, and he believed that he was the Messiah. (Matt. 23:39; John 3:18; Matt. 24:5.) His experiences were those he believed the Messiah would have, even to the death on the cross. To him the Messiahship meant perfect brotherliness toward man and complete sonship toward God. (Luke 19:10; John 15:13.) He could not love God with all his heart, soul, and strength unless he loved his neighbor as himself. Neither could he love his neighbor as himself unless he loved God with all his being.

This conception of Messiahship led Jesus to place his personality in the spiritual norm which he gave to his followers. To arrive at spiritual power, peace, and joy they must keep the commandments and love God and their fellow man as he had done. In him as the Messiah the lessons and the requirements were ended; and spiritual power for the accomplishment of all that had been promised was released.

After nineteen centuries the Christian Church holds substantially the same views of the Messiahship of Jesus as were held by the early Christians. Dr. Cheyne says: "What we most keenly wish to know is, . . . what peculiarity there was in the personality of Jesus of Nazareth which led his early disciples to identify him with Christ, the Son of God, and by which we, too, so long afterwards, are led habitually to call him 'our Lord' and 'our Saviour.' This, and nothing but

this, stands as the most fascinating critical problem presented by the Gospels. Why did an early Christian say, 'Every spirit which confesses that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is born of God'? (1 John 4: 2.) And again, 'Who is he that conquers the world, but he that believes that Jesus is the Son of God?'[3] (1 John 5: 5.)" To this inquiry of Dr. Cheyne's the Jews of to-day would probably make answer: "What, indeed, was there in Jesus of Nazareth that has led Christians through the centuries to insist that he was the Jews' Messiah?"

As with the Messianic idea, so with the conception of the kingdom of God, Jesus filled the old form with a new content. This kingdom of which he taught was a conquering kingdom, and its conquests would exceed anything conceived by Old Testament prophets. It was leaven which would leaven the whole lump (Matt. 13: 13); a seed cast upon the earth which springs up and grows, the sower knows not how (Mark 4: 26, 27); it was, in fact, the reign of the Messiah—of Jesus—who said: "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." (John 12: 32.)

So gradually did Jesus move forward in his teaching that not even his disciples comprehended anything of the vastness of the changes he was making in these two great national ideas. Even after they began to think of him as their long-expected Messiah come to usher in the longed-for kingdom they failed to recognize how he was spiritualizing these conceptions. They

[3] "Bible Problems," pp. 66, 67.

were thinking about the places they would be likely to get in the glorified kingdom with their teacher on the throne. (Mark 9:34.)

Then came the sudden and, to the disciples, totally unexpected death of their leader. Their Messianic hopes, and their hopes for the restoration of the throne of David, perished in a breath.

The Birth of Christianity

During the space of forty days following that Sunday morning when Jesus was first reported to have been seen by one of his followers, a mighty change took place in the small group which had been intimately associated with Jesus. Of these events Dr. Bosworth has written: "What shall we say actually happened in these experiences that the disciples are reported to have had with Jesus after his death? There may well have been a degree of idealization, some exercise of devout imagination, especially in the only long resurrection narrative found in the first three Gospesl, the one describing the experience of the two men walking in the country. . . . But this supposition of a degree of idealization does not at all account for the great central fact. The fact is that something happened which convinced the disciples that Jesus did not remain in the underworld where the dead were supposed to await the resurrection, but instead was lifted up by God to be Lord of all in the heavens. It would have been natural for the disciples, after they saw that God did not send Elijah to help Jesus on the cross, nor in any

other way deliver him from being swallowed up in death, to suppose that he had joined the long succession of martyr prophets. . . . But this is not what they did. Something happened that was decisive enough to change their disappointment into enthusiasm, to take their thoughts decisively and suddenly from the underworld to the highest heaven. That which is reported to have effected this change is certain experiences with Jesus himself. . . . The great convictions that arose in their souls out of such an experience seemed to them, and were, the voice of their living Lord." [4]

For a time the followers of Christ and Jews worshiped together in the Temple; the only differences of any consequence between them were concerning Jesus Christ. Later, as was natural, the Christians were

[4] See Bosworth, "The Life and Teaching of Jesus," p. 305. "The various phases of this great experience with the will of God group themselves under three ideas that run through all his teaching—namely, the Fatherhood of God, a phase that connotes superior power and loving care over beings like in kind to himself and indebted to him for existence; the brotherhood of man, or the unity of the human race; and personal immortality, or the durability of the righteous individual in a brotherhood unimpaired by the phenomenon of physical death. Jesus was not the original discoverer of these ideas, for they all appear either before his day or among contemporaries uninfluenced by his thought. They are ideas that more and more evidently seem to represent the central trend of the moral evolution of man, which is the unfolding will of God. But Jesus in his exploration of the will of God conceived them with peculiar simplicity and warmth of personal experience, and with a sense of their unity and inseparableness."

forced out of the synagogues. They then established churches in which they worshiped. But the synagogue was never transformed into a church, nor was the worship of the early Christians a modified form of Jewish worship. Very soon the Christians became a distinct group known for their devotion to their great leader and for determined adherence to the principles he had established.

The Center of Christianity a Person

Christianity is a most difficult religion to define because it is built around a personality. Christianity is not a creed, a set of doctrines, a dogma, a Church, or the Bible. The center of Christianity is Jesus, who by Christians is called Christ: not a Christology, not what is said or believed about Christ, but Jesus, the Christ who once walked and taught in Palestine. The publican who, Jesus said, went down to his house justified had no Christology. It was not of any Christology that the thief on the cross was thinking when he asked his fellow sufferer near him to remember him when he came into his kingdom. The preaching of the early evangelists was practically devoid of theology. When they entered the doctrinal realm it was to prove that Jesus was what they proclaimed him to be. The one theme of their preaching was Jesus, the redeemer sent of God, who had so recently been among them.

An experience which greatly influenced the followers of Jesus is described in the early chapters of Acts

as the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. This did not have the effect of separating those who had experienced the "enduement" from Christ, but it brought to them a sense of being in the living presence of Jesus. He who had been with them in the flesh now seemed to be with them in the spirit. This feeling was also later shared by those who had not known Jesus in the flesh, but had come to believe in him through the preaching of other Christians.

Creeds and doctrines naturally come to dominate any religious system, just as ethical codes influence morals; but creeds and ethical systems are of slow growth. The disciples who had been with Jesus, the apostles and evangelists of the early Church thought and taught Jesus Christ. The morality and their religion consisted in his teachings plus himself. It is not strange that religious and ethical systems have been built upon Christ's teachings, but at first his followers had no need for such systems. Under Paul's expositions Christian doctrine took form, but Paul's motto was: Christ and him crucified. To Paul, Christ embodied all the moral and religious attributes and ideals of man: Christ was the personification of spiritual life. The "thou musts" and the "thou must nots" were not negation and restrictions, but directions as to how one might receive spiritual power and achieve the full life which Christ made possible. Paul was not trying to establish irrefutable doctrines, but to help Christians to put Christ at the center of their lives that

they might thereby have the added strength and joy which only Christ can supply in their fullness.

The Spiritual Current

It seems certain that most of those who accepted the Christian faith in the early years became conscious of being in touch with spiritual power. They had not accepted new doctrines only, or simply come to have some new view of religion: a new and transforming power had entered their lives. Many of those who first turned to Christianity were from the common walks of life, and unlearned. But in some strange way they were able to so explain this new way to others that they also became mediums through which the current of spiritual force which had entered their lives passed to others; and so on in never-ending progression.

The one theme preached and lived by all was: Love to God and love to man as Christ loved. This was the switch which connected life with spiritual power at its maximum. Meeting the simple conditions of this love standard resulted in throwing the spiritual switch, and current, of which the recipient was conscious, flowed in.

Here is the mystical relation between God and man which worshipers have sought from earliest days at its highest and best. Here also is an ethical relationship between men which, if fully attained by all men, would make ethical systems unnecessary. Though mystical, these relations are not irrational: they are inevitable results of spiritual force when it flows

through life at its maximum strength. And the laws which control this spiritual force have always existed. Christ made possible the throwing of the spiritual switch, and since his day millions have found contact with spiritual power through him. Just what he added to the love norm, which had been known by the ancients, cannot be estimated. But it is known that love to God, and love to man, which he passed on in commandment from those who had known of them before, became transformed when they flowed through his personality.

After a great truth or a great discovery has been made known to man, its progress is no longer dependent upon its discoverer. If all the men who build and fly airplanes and all knowledge of aëronautics were suddenly wiped out, other men would soon be building and flying planes because they know that men have flown. But the spiritual standard set forth by Jesus is different. Though man learn all that has been written or said about religion and morals, he will never understand this standard set forth by Jesus until he sees it through Jesus. To the objection that this position is irrational, those who hold it would say: "Irrational or not, those who have held this position, and have tested it in practical living, have achieved results in morals and religion of surpassing greatness." However he came by his conceptions, Jesus believed that the spiritual well-being of the world depended upon the relation which he would make possible between God and man. Though warned that in so doing he would be

making himself equal with God, Jesus assumed and exercised power to forgive sins.

Jesus went to the cross because he believed it was necessary for him thus to suffer and die; and he was confident that by so doing he was finishing a work which would never need to be accomplished again. Without boasting, Jesus assumed for himself a place in the spiritual progress of the race which none other could or need occupy. Scholars have pointed out that practically everything Jesus taught had been taught by teachers before him. Even the two great commandments upon which he rested his spiritual standard had been set forth by a teacher long before. Yet Jesus most certainly contributed something to the spiritual standard when he said: "Love as I have loved." Upon this new contribution a new civilization has been built. As to what the contribution really is there have been innumerable opinions, but practically all are agreed that Christianity is centered around Christ: that its force flows through his personality.

Since he gave no doctrinal or ethical systems, his standard can be finally tested only by the results which its functioning in society produces. Here is a case where the pragmatic test appears to be the only test possible. Are Christ's claims valid? Love God and love man as he loved and see if by so doing the kingdom of God is promoted to the extent that peace on earth and good will toward man are more perceptible. Jesus used and justified this test when he said: "By their fruits ye shall know them."

Christ the Center of Creeds

Though Jesus left no doctrinal or ethical systems, it was inevitable that such systems should grow up to distinguish between those who were of the new *way* and those who were not. All the creeds of Christendom center around Christ. The first recorded Christian creed is Peter's confession: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." (Matt. 16:16.) That has been the central thought of all Christian creeds. "In conformity with the baptismal formula, however, it soon took a trinitarian shape, probably in such form as 'I believe in God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.' Gradually it expanded by the addition of other articles into the various rules of faith, of which the Roman form under the title 'the Apostles' Creed' became the prevailing one, after the fourth century, in the West, and the Nicene Creed in the East. The Protestant Church, as a separate organization, dates from 1517, but it was not until 1530 that its faith was properly formalized in the Augsburg Confession."[5]

The Apostles' Creed was first found in its present form in the writings of a Frankish abbot named Priminius, who died in 753 A.D.[6] But the old Roman Creed, formulated by 340 A.D., had about the same wording. At least it gave as much place to Jesus Christ. Tertullian, writing in about the year 200 A.D., had something near the form of the Apostles' Creed:

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[5] Schaff, "The Creeds of Christendom," Vol. 1, p. 6.

[6] The Macmillan Company, 1924, "Creeds and Loyalty," p. 37.

"One God Almighty, maker of the world, and in his Son, Jesus Christ, born of the Virgin Mary, crucified under Pontius Pilate." Irenæus wrote of the "ancient tradition, believing in one God, maker of heaven and earth, and all that is in them, through Jesus Christ, the Son of God."[7]

An examination of the Apostles' Creed shows that eight of its twelve articles refer directly or indirectly to Jesus Christ. Of the twelve articles of the Nicene Creed eight refer directly or indirectly to him. The third of the three great creeds of the Church, the Athanasian Creed, is much longer than either the Apostles' Creed or the Nicene Creed, and is usually considered of a later date.[8] This creed is more thoroughly centered in Jesus Christ than either of the other two. There were many different creeds and doctrinal statements during the centuries before the Reformation. They were always attempts to interpret Christ and his mission intellectually, and they always placed him at the center of the social order. They failed woefully at times to comprehend the norm, or spiritual standard, which Christ set forth; yet the civilization built around their creeds was the best of their day, and it always had Christ at the center.

Luther broke away from the elaborate system of "works," which had been built up by the Roman

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[7] *Ibid.*

[8] Alexander Stewart, "Creeds and Churches," pp. 88 ff.; Briggs, "Theological Symbols," p. 100ff.; Schaff, "Creeds of Christendom," Vol. 1, p. 34ff.

Church, for a life of faith. "The just shall live by faith" (Rom. 1:17; Gal. 3:11) became the great keynote of the reformers; and it was faith in Jesus Christ. The Smalcald Articles, sometimes called the Protestant Declaration of Independence, were prepared to state the case of the Protestants against Rome. While brief, they plainly show the central place given to Christ by the German reformers. The many Lutheran formularies are built around the conception of "Justification by Faith," and thereby clearly are built around Christ, who is the center of this faith.[9]

"There were in all over thirty Reformed Creeds,"[10] though many were of only small local authority, setting forth the beliefs of the reformers of Switzerland, France, Holland, England, Scotland, and Germany. Within a century and a half following the Reformation many other doctrinal statements grew up. Through the years such statements have continued to multiply, as denominations have increased. The "Yearbook of the Churches" lists upward of two hundred different Christian bodies, each of which has distinct doctrinal or creedal belief, yet all of them center about Christ.

Tested by the standard set forth by Jesus, those who have held these creeds and doctrines have often failed of high spiritual achievement. But in almost every instance that could be chosen the stream of spiritual

[9] "Creeds and Churches," p. 140ff.; Briggs, "Theological symbols," p. 158ff.; "Creeds of Christendom," p. 203ff.

[10] Schaff, *Ibid.*, p. 357.

force has been more clearly manifested in the lives of Christians than in the lives of their contemporaries of whatever land or faith. Whatever the failure of Christian organizations to measure up to the highest, their strength has been drawn from Christ.

Jesus the Center of Individual Christian Life

The tie which bound his disciples to him was spiritual, and the standard he held before them was the love standard. How well many of them succeed in following this standard is shown by the transforming power which flowed through many of these humble followers to others. Only a few of the characters[11] of apostolic times have been preserved for us in the meager records handed down. But among these characters are shining examples of Christ-centered lives through whom flowed a power-current of spiritual force. Luke, John Mark, Barnabas, Silas, and Tychicus, along with others, were apostolic missionaries and laborers with the great missionary apostle Paul. Timothy and Titus were evangelistic pastors, apparently laboring under the direction of Paul. The direction and the force of these men's lives were spiritual, and their norm was the love norm.

In the period immediately following the apostolic age there are even clearer evidences that Christians of that day were Christ-centered and were in touch with spiritual power. The inevitable separation with Juda-

[11] Nichols, "Growth of the Christian Church," Vol. 1, pp. 20, 21.

ism came early. Christians ceased altogether the observance of the last day of the week and gathered for worship on the first day because of the peculiar significance of this day for the followers of Christ. Eventually all the distinctively Jewish feasts, ceremonies, rituals, and rites were discarded, and Christians refused to be bound by the traditions of the fathers of Israel. Their allegiance to Christ bound them completely, and they found in his teachings and example ground for distinctly Christian rites and ceremonies. However, they never thought of abandoning Jehovah God, or the commandments which he had given through Moses, and which were accepted by Christ. They only broke with the Jewish leaders, as they felt led to do, that they might follow Christ completely.

It is significant that all these changes were made after Christ had gone from them; yet Christians were conscious of being led into the new ways by the departed Christ, who, they believed, was still present with them in spirit. They accepted the spiritual standard he gave them and were quick to conclude that the new spiritual power which they felt was his presence working in and through them. They believed that by this power Christ would accomplish through them all that he had said he would accomplish. They quickly became a force which "turned the world upside down," because they believe that the world needed such treatment and that this was what Christ meant to accomplish through them.

Not all the Christians of that early day were of the

high-powered, world-upsetting type. Paul's letters introduce some very ordinary "saints" who, if they were living to-day, would doubtless feel very much at ease with the type of Church member who is so much a part of the world that he knows nothing of a spiritual force which works from within outward, transforming first the morals and religion of the one in whom the force is working, then through this individual begins its transforming work in the individuals he touches.

Paul's letters also indicate what he thought was the difference between these ordinary "saints" and those who were kingdom builders. The difference was solely the amount of spiritual force in the life; and the spiritual state of the Christian depended upon the keeping of the love standard which Christ had given. Paul never looked for strength through numbers, or through organized power of the Christian Church. To him Christians were a channel through whom spiritual power could flow. If he foresaw that in time the Church would be a mighty organization, nothing that we have from him indicates that he thought that its power would come from the organization. To him Christ was the source of power for the Christian—a power so irresistible and compelling that no other force was needed.

What Paul saw with such clearness other Christians of that early day saw with sufficient clearness to enable them to live lives of great spiritual power. No other record in history anywhere equals the amazing accomplishments of the humble followers of Christ during

the first two centuries. During this period few of the learned or the great were numbered with the Christians. The Church during this time was not looked upon as a power with which governments might have to reckon. The force by which transformations were wrought was spiritual and flowed through Christian lives, lives which were centered in Christ. During this period forces were moving upon the world to bless it with ideals, with visions of righteousness and human liberty and happiness.

All the bright accomplishments and promises of the Church attracted the Roman Emperor, Constantine, and he sought to further them and make them permanent through royal decree. The emperor's purpose was noble, and possibly at least measurably unselfish. He had power, and he used it to help what he considered a noble cause. Doubtless he thought that he was doing a great service to the Christian cause. If this new cause, which had so often been persecuted, could accomplish so much without a strong organization and without governmental favor, what might it accomplish with the Roman Emperor as its chief patron?

From Constantine to Luther Christian thought, both ecclesiastical and individual, was centered in creeds and Church dogmas, and for over a thousand years the progress of civilization toward idealism was almost negligible. The spiritual forces were then as available as they had been in the preceding period, but the standard followed was different. Men's lives were wrongly

centered and did not furnish a channel for spiritual power. Spiritual forces still operated by the same laws, and force was released in proportion to the conditions that were met.

The situation is well summed up by C. Loring Brace: "The union of the Christian Church with the State under Constantine we regard as one of the great blunders of the historical Church, which has drawn after it a long train of evils, whose effects are even yet experienced. Could Christianity have been permitted to grow, as it did under the civil power and with a simple organization, we should not have had, indeed, the grand spectacle of an apparently converted imperial court and an official hierarchy, and a Church supported by armies and governed by warriors and courtiers, and of a vast population suddenly made nominal Christians. But we should have been saved a paganized peasantry, a corrupt priesthood, a hierarchy full of greed and ambition, ages of blood and religious warfare, and a Church which persecuted both science and differing opinions. The Christian faith would have grown up where it belongs —in quiet, humble places—and would have reformed manners and morals before it took on legislation. Christ's principles would have been a spiritual power in the world, not a form or an institution, and would have thus finally permeated society. So far from regarding the rapid spread of the Christian religion in the Roman world as a sign of its divine origin and an evidence of its triumph, we consider it as almost a fatal occur-

rence, and as having impeded the spread of Christ's real truth ever since."[12]

Another negative illustration is found in the conquest of a large part of Eastern Christianity by the Turk. Christianity was not eradicated in the conquered regions. The conquered Christians were permitted to continue their worship and to retain their hierarchy. In fact, "the Patriarch of Constantinople even had his powers increased. He was placed over the other three patriarchs of the East, Antioch, Jerusalem, and Alexandria, and was made head of all the territory of the Eastern Church except Russia."[13] But this ecclesiastical potentate was appointed by the sultan, to whom he owed his power. Ecclesiastical offices were obtained by bribery and kept by flattery.

The Church had a right to live under the Turk, but it virtually died. The reason is obvious. The right to exist was derived from the sultan; hence power was centered in the State; and it has no relation to the spiritual power which flows through Christ, down through the individual Christian, then out into society. Not one of the three conditions for the perfect function of the spiritual law was met. With his fawning attitude toward temporal power, the Christian could not have loved his God unreservedly, neither could he have loved his neighbor as himself. Certainly he could not love as Christ had loved. Whatever his religious or moral attainments under such circumstances, he

[12] "Gesta Christi," pp. 51, 52.

[13] Nichols, *Ibid.*, Vol. 2, p. 105.

could not have possessed a great amount of spiritual power.

Spiritual force has never been possessed in great measure by the Eastern Church. A Church built upon a physical conception of the sacraments[14] could only accidentally, if at all, meet the requirements of the love standard. Yet the Eastern Church, as evidenced by its creeds, had a sufficient amount of truth to have given it spiritual power if spiritual force is acquired through doctrinal or creedal truths. Therefore, the name Christian and possession of truths taught by Christ do not of themselves release the maximum of spiritual power.

It will help to clarify the love standard for the functioning of spiritual force to contrast with this spiritual impotency of a great Church the dynamic spiritual energy of the small group of apostolic Christians. Paul perhaps lived the norm set forth by Christ as completely as it was ever lived by any one besides Christ himself. An accurate chronology of Paul's life is impossible; but by pushing the date of his conversion back to the farthest possible limit, 32 A.D., and his death forward to the farthest possible limit, 67, we have thirty-five years of Christian life for the apostle. Somewhere between three and eleven years were spent in preparation and in getting started. It was perhaps in 44 or 45 that he was summoned to Antioch to help Barnabas where he began his first

[14] Brown, "Essence of Christianity," pp. 69-72.

recorded Christian work.[15] Therefore, his work that has so greatly affected all subsequent history was compassed within twenty-three years.

At the same time, and for a somewhat longer period than Paul, other men, in whose lives the spiritual standard was realized in great measure, were trying to love and live as Christ had loved and lived. During the first thirty-five years of Christianity, spiritual power functioned with mighty force because it found outlet, or channels, in lives that were so nearly normative. Contrast the spiritual accomplishment of this brief period with the spiritual lethargy of the years from the union of Church and State under Constantine in 325 to the date when spiritual light broke forth through the preaching of Luther in the early sixteenth century.

The clear implication is that spiritual power functions uniformly according to conditions which obtain. The time of greatest spiritual progress was at the beginning of the Christian era when a few lives approximated the proper conditions for the functioning of spiritual power. These few lives had accepted the love standard and endeavored to live that standard as Christ had lived it. Theology and dogma were not yet crystallized. Doubts and questions as to theory and practice were not yet troublesome, though they frequently arose. History does not show that any great number of these early Christians were in any way outstanding. For the most part they occupied obscure

[15] Hastings' Bible Dictionary, Vol. 3, pp. 715, 716.

positions, and the practice of their religion won for them disapproval rather than favor. Yet, in the space of less than two hundred years these humble Christians had brought about a mighty revolution in the world.

During the long period of spiritual lethargy which followed this brilliant era, the intellectual content of the spiritual standard lost nothing; in fact, this content was required of all who belonged to the Church. Religion and ethics were formal, creedal, legalistic. Love to God and love to man were required by law, but were met, if at all, legalistically, and not as Christ had loved. As the legal requirements increased, the spiritual force lessened. The Roman Church became a mighty world power whose force was the sword, but whose weakness was that, with all her wealth and power, she could not produce changed lives or bring about conditions of righteousness.

Following the Reformation spiritual force produced much the same results that it had produced in the first period of Church history, but such results were achieved only when the requirements of the spiritual standard were met. Formal, creedal, legalistic religion has not accomplished more for Protestantism than was accomplished by such religion in other periods. The Quakers have not accepted many of the tenets of creedal orthodoxy, and their spiritual lives have not rested upon doctrinal statements; yet they have manifested the fruits of spiritual power quite as much as the most orthodox. Perhaps the tendency toward formalism is natural, and it appears always to be the

belief of the legalist that he can devise the perfect religous formula; but spiritual fruits are not produced in abundance in this way. Individual Christians and members of Churches holding markedly different doctrinal views have found similar Christian joy and have shown similar spiritual strength when they have lived the love norm. The spiritual experience of an Episcopalian and of a soldier of the Salvation Army, of a Presbyterian and a Holy Roller, are not markedly different when each has set himself to love God with all his heart, might, mind, and strength, and to love his neighbor as himself even as Christ loved. Stranger still, such similar results are accomplished when each Christian is true to his creedal, or lack of creedal, standard just so long as the love norm is followed.

Conclusions

1. Jesus did not increase the religious concepts, but enlarged and filled to their full each of the three fundamental conceptions. With him religion was

Cosmogonic
Mystical
Ethical

but with unlimited capacity in all directions. His cosmology centered around God, but God was not just an all-powerful Creator and an austere Judge: He is first and last a loving Father who seeks above all things the welfare of his children. Religion is still mystical, but with all fear removed through the conscious relation of the spiritual child to the heavenly Father. The terror of death has been destroyed through the resur-

rection hope which assures conscious existence and union with Deity and loved ones in a spiritual realm. Jesus raised ethics, both toward God and man, above commandments and duty to the high plain where they are consummated in unselfish love. Jesus was neither a religious controversalist nor a moral reformer in the ordinary conception of these terms. His primary purpose was to bring people into conscious relation with God, and to show man how he might use spiritual power.

2. Christianity is built around Jesus Christ and is in no sense a revamped or reformed Judaism. The creeds and standards of all Christian Churches have Jesus at the center, yet they deny none of the fundamental principles of Old Testament truth. Nothing of truth or spiritual force was lost in the transfer from Judaism to Christianity.

3. Christians draw inspiration and spiritual force from Jesus Christ. Just how, they have never been able to set forth in their creeds and doctrines, but when they have followed the love standard as he gave it they have been conscious of spiritual power.

4. Intellectual conception of truth or spiritual law does not of itself release spiritual force. Spiritual force follows definite channels and flows forth into life when connected with these channels.

5. Spiritual force is governed by absolute laws and is released only in accordance with these laws. These laws are finally summed up for man's use in the love standard enunciated by Jesus.

CHAPTER V

SPIRITUAL FORCE IN HISTORY

NINETEEN hundred years is a short period in the life-span of a universe, but any standard of human conduct which has been proved by nineteen hundred years of testing may be said to be established. There is a sense in which, as is sometimes charged, Christianity has never been tried. There is also a sense in which we may say that Christianity has been tried constantly ever since its principles were made clear. It was being tried in the Dark Ages, when those who professed Christianity were trying to make of it a legalistic supergovernment. It should suffice that after nineteen hundred years the love norm is more widely accepted than ever before; and that neither by those who have accepted and tried to live it nor by those who have not put it to a test has any higher or more perfect standard been set forth.

But the love test as set forth by Christ does not require the proving of time any more than a laboratory test needs to be repeated through thousands of years in order to establish a certain chemical reaction. The love norm is a formula, if we may so use this term, by which spiritual force functions with most beneficent results in human life and in society. Spiritual force will function continuously if the conditions of the norm are maintained, and it will function perfectly if

these conditions are produced after a lapse of a thousand years. These facts are set forth by even a hasty survey of Christian history.

Immediate Results through Following the Love Standard

The Jewish leaders heard the apostles who began proclaiming spiritual truth as they had learned it from Christ, and the one thing that impressed the scholarly leaders was that the apostles were unlearned and ignorant men. The multitudes heard them, and thousands acted upon what they heard and came into contact with spiritual power which changed their lives. Soon missionaries were going over Palestine and into regions beyond. Within a few years there were a number of Churches scattered over Asia Minor and southeastern Europe. The members of these Churches were largely drawn from the slave class[1] and from other low classes of society. No doubt many, perhaps most, of these members had been addicted to the moral evils of the times before they had come under the influence of the missionaries' preaching. From Paul's letters we know that the old evils were not easily rooted out; but from the first the love norm, as set forth by Christ, was the standard for the new Church. How-

[1] Nichols, "The Growth of the Christian Church," Vol. 1, p. 20. "A Christian Church in these times was usually a small company of believers living in a large heathen town. Almost all of them were poor people, some of them slaves, although there were some Christians of higher social rank, especially in the Roman Church."

ever the new Christians might waver, they were held to the high standard of pure living under the guidance and power of the new spiritual force which had come into their lives.[2]

Paul's second letter to the Church at Corinth is a good illustration of how the Christian missionaries held the early followers to a standard equally as high as any set or attained in later ages. In 1 Thessalonians 4: 1-12 Paul makes it plain that Christians could not indulge in sensuality, which was practiced unrebuked all about them; and he lays upon them as duty that they love their brethren. Love was taught in many other religions and philosophies, as a theory; but Christians were required to express this love toward others in their everyday living. Peter, James, and John were equally uncompromising in their requirements of high and holy living. History shows that these early Christians met this high test in a remarkable way.

The persecutions which followed the burning of Rome, 64 A.D., claimed an unknown number of martyrs. "The phrase, 'a huge multitude,' is one of the

[2] *Ibid.* "Everywhere certain things distinguished the Christians from their pagan neighbors. They called each other brethren in Christ, and really acted as brethren. The poor, the sick, the widows, and the orphans were cared for. The collection and administration of charitable funds formed one of the most important parts of the life of the early Churches. Within the Church social distinctions were abolished. Master and slave stood on one level. Women held a much more honorable and influential position than they did in the world outside. The Christians were marked also by a moral earnestness and a purity unknown elsewhere."

few existing indications of the number of Christians in the Roman Church."[3] This phrase likewise indicates the character of these early Christians. None of them could have been many years in this new faith; each one could have saved himself from torture and death by renouncing his Christ.[4]

This illustration of the spiritual life of the early Church becomes more remarkable when we consider the brief existence of the Church up to that time. We do not know when the first convert reached Rome, nor

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[3] Farrar, "Early Days of Christianity," Vol. 1, p. 39. Farrar here quotes from Tacitus and Clemens Romanus, translating a phrase from each, "A huge multitude."

[4] Fisher, "The History of the Christian Church," pp. 47, 48, has this to say of a later persecution under Marcus Aurelius, the Emperor, whose Stoical writings set forth many of the ideals and truths held by Christians: "One of the martyrs was the venerable Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna, who had sat at the feet of John the Apostle. It was at the time of the Christian Easter festival, when the heathen were at their races and other games in the presence of the proconsul, Titus Quadratus. The aged saint was arrested by soldiers in a house in the neighborhood of the city, where he had taken refuge. He declined to avail himself of another opportunity to escape. When he was required to curse Christ, he answered: 'Six and eighty years have I served him, and he has done me nothing but good; and how could I curse him, my Lord and my Saviour?' Refusing to renounce the faith, he was burned to death. . . . The severity of the tortures, endured without flinching, even by young maidens, at the hands of heathen magistrates, almost surpass belief. The story of the torments borne by Ponticus, a youth of sixteen, and by Blandina, a female slave, are of this character. Tortures prolonged from morning until night could only elicit from this delicate maiden the exclamation: 'I am a Christian; among us no evil is done.'"

when the Roman Church was organized. Certainly to allow twenty years of life to the Church before the Neronian persecutions would be generous. Yet in that time many Christians of a type to endure martyrdom for their faith had been gathered into the Church at Rome; and this number was multiplied many times in Christian communities outside of Rome.[5] There can be no doubt but that the following of this love norm did bring transforming results from the first. Character was made over and was made strong.

Christianity and Rome

Though Christianity was an outgrowth of Judaism, it had its birth in a Roman civilization. Its worth and influence are to be measured chiefly by its effect upon the civilization into which it came. The Jews had the spiritual capacity and the intellectual conception of religion which should have made them the logical mediums through whom spiritual force would find its way into civilization. They lost their opportunity in refusing to permit Jesus of Nazareth to complete their love standard. They had all the elements of the norm which he established except that of his own personality, which they would not accept. When Jesus Christ was

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 46. "Pliny (Propraetor in Bithynia), writing in 111 A.D., represents that in that region many of both sexes, of all ages, and of every rank were accused of being Christians. This 'superstition,' as he calls Christianity, had diffused itself in country places as well as in cities. The temples of the heathen gods had been almost forsaken. Victims for sacrifice had found few purchasers."

preached to those outside the Jewish nation as one through whom they might come into contact with spiritual power, many accepted the teaching and put their lives into contact with spiritual power. Thus it came about that spiritual power flowed into the civilization of the times through the degeneracy of Roman paganism rather than through the higher spiritual culture of the Jews.[6]

Some of the greatest manifestations of spiritual force yet seen occurred in the debased Roman civilization of

[6] Fisher, *Ibid.*, pp. 7, 8. "The condition of the civilized nations at the birth of Christ was propitious for the introduction and spread of a new religion, in its nature adapted to all mankind. Under the sovereignty of Rome, beneath the shield of law and a government that enforced order, they were combined into vast political order. The world had experienced the benefit of two civilizing agencies, Greek culture and Roman sway. The old mythological religions, which had sprung originally from a deifying of nature, had fallen into decay and lost their hold on the intelligent class. Nothing had arisen to fill the void thus created. . . . 'Having no hope and without God in the world,' an apostle's description of the heathen generally, was eminently true at this period. Meanwhile the whole course of events which had resulted in the upbuilding of imperial Rome had produced and diffused abroad in the civilized nations a profligacy which probably had no parellel, before or since, in the annals of the race. The loosening of the bonds of morality, the prevalence of vice, not to dwell on the remorse and fears of conscience that haunted souls not hardened by evil, could not fail to awaken in many the sense of the need of a more effectual restraint than heathen worship, or Greek letters and philosophy, or Roman civil law could furnish. There was a craving, more or less obscurely felt, for a new regenerating force that should enter with life-giving efficiency into the heart of ancient society. The age was ripe and ready for the incoming of such an epoch."

the first century A.D., and were due entirely to the few Christian lives of that time and place that so nearly approximated the conditions for the functioning of spiritual force.

Harnack says of these Christians: "The second characteristic feature of the primitive community is that every individual in it, even the slaves, possess a living experience of God. This is sufficiently remarkable; for at first sight we might think that all this devotion to Christ, and this unconditional reverence for him, must necessarily have resulted in all religion becoming punctilious subjection to his words, and so a kind of voluntary servitude. But the Pauline Epistles and the Acts of the Apostles give us a different picture. While they do indeed attest the fact that Jesus's words were held in unqualified reverence, this fact is not the most prominent feature in the picture of earliest Christendom. What is much more characteristic is that individual Christians, moved by the spirit of God, are placed in a living and entirely personal relation to God himself."[7]

We miss the full force of the high standard of these early Christians if we fail to keep in mind the depraved civilization in which they were living.

Farrar paints the picture of that decadent time in burning colors:

> The epoch which witnessed the early growth of Christianity was an epoch of which the horror and degradation

[7] "What Is Christianity?" Crown Library, second edition, p. 177.

have rarely been equaled and perhaps never exceeded in the annals of mankind. Were we to form our sole estimate of it from the lurid picture of its wickedness which St. Paul in more than one passage has painted with a few powerful strokes, we might suppose that we were judging it from a too lofty standpoint. We might be accused of throwing too dark a shadow upon the crimes of paganism, when we set it as a foil to the luster of an ideal holiness. But even if St. Paul had never paused amid his sacred reasonings to affix his terrible brand upon the pride of heathenism, there would still be abundant proofs of the abnormal wickedness which accompanied the decadence of ancient civilization. They are stamped upon its coinage, cut on its gems, painted upon its chamber-walls, sown broadcast over the pages of its poets, satirists, and historians. "Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant!" Is there any age which stands so instantly condemned by the bare mention of its rulers as that which recalls the successive names of Tiberius, Gaius, Claudius, Nero, Galba, Otho, and Vitellius, and which, after a brief gleam of better examples under Vespasian and Titus, sank at last under the hideous tyranny of a Domitian? . . . I need but make a parting allusion to its enormous wealth; its unbounded self-indulgence; its greedy avarice; its sense of insecurity and terror; its apathy, debauchery, and cruelty; its hopeless fatalism; its unspeakable sadness and weariness; its strange extravagance alike of infidelity and of superstition.

At the lowest extreme of the social scale were millions of slaves, without family, without religion, without possessions, who had no recognized rights, and toward whom none had any recognized duties, passing normally from a childhood of degradation to a manhood of hardship and an old age of unpitied neglect. Only a little above the slaves stood the lower classes, who formed the vast majority of the freeborn inhabitants of the Roman Empire. They were for the most part beggars and idlers, familiar with the grossest indignities of an unscrupulous depend-

ence. Despising a life of honest industry, they asked only for bread and the games of the circus, and were ready to support any government, even the most despotic, if it would supply these needs. . . . Their life, as described for us by their contemporaries, was largely made up of squalor, misery, and vice.

Immeasurably removed from these needy and greedy freemen, and living chiefly amid crowds of corrupted and obsequious slaves, stood the constantly diminishing throng of the wealthy and the noble, . . . squandering a fortune at a single banquet, drinking out of the myrrhine and jeweled vases worth hundreds of pounds, and feasting on the brains of peacocks and the tongues of nightingales. As a consequence, disease was rife, men were short-lived, and even women became liable to gout. Over the most of Italy most of the freeborn population had to content themselves, even in winter, with a tunic, and the luxury of the toga was reserved only, by way of honor, to the corpse. Yet at this very time the dress of the Roman ladies displayed an unheard-of splendor. The elder Pliny tells us that he himself saw Lollia Paulina dressed for a betrothal feast in a robe entirely covered with pearls and emeralds, which had cost forty million sesterces (over $2,000,000), and which was known to be less costly than some of her other dresses. Gluttony, caprice, extravagance, ostentation, impurity, rioted in the heart of society, which knew no other means by which to break the monotony of its weariness or alleviate the anguish of its despair.[8]

If we wish to add to this tale of vice and debauchery of the times of early Christianity, we could do so from almost any page of their history. It is well to remember that much that was best in former civilizations had come to its flower in the days of Rome which we are studying. True, the religion of Rome, which had

[8] "Early Days of Christianity," pp. 1-4.

been made to fit the state, and never had been highly beneficent, had been practically abandoned. But Stoicism, the best of all the ancient philosophies, was accepted by the leaders of Roman thought; and some of its greatest teachers and exponents were Roman citizens, and contemporaries of the early Christian teachers. Seneca, the Spanish rhetorician, perhaps the most facile of the writers on Stoicism, must have been in Rome at the same time Paul was teaching there. C. Loring Brace says: "Whether he ever came directly in contact with Christianity has been much discussed. It is at least doubtful if he ever read the sacred writings of our faith. But Paul must have preached to the lower retainers of the imperial court in Rome while he was one of its literary members."[9] Though Seneca professed inability to live the principles of the Stoics, he well understood their teachings, and his writings show that their great doctrines were implanted in his philosophy. The writings of Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius also show clear comprehension of the great teachings of the Stoics.

It is significant that Stoicism, which included in its system most of the best of the ancient philosophies and religions, and Christianity should meet in Rome. In this meeting all the advantages semed to be with Stoicism. Says James Freeman Clarke: "The system of the Stoics was exactly adapted to the Roman character."[10] Stoicism was the accepted philosophy of the

[9] "The Unknown God," p. 134.

[10] "Ten Great Religions," Vol. 1, p. 345.

court and literary circles. It had the favor of those in power, who accepted its principles, but made no effort to practice them. Christianity meanwhile was winning its way among the slaves and the scarcely less miserable freemen. Its central teachings ran counter to accepted Roman standards. "The idea of Rome is law, that of Christianity is love."[11] Rome was tolerant toward all religions; so readily accepted the Stoic practice of taking that which it chose and rejecting what it would from other systems. Christianity was intolerant toward other systems. It declared that it alone had all the truth; that its God alone was the one true God and that all other gods were mere fictions. It would not even grant enduring worth or power to the prided Roman state or the boasted Roman law. Certainly, in the setting of the "battle array" between Stoicism and Christianity in Rome the contestants seemed most unequally matched, with the points almost all in favor of the pagan philosophy, which for over eight hundred years had undergone the purifying process of passing through great minds.

The outstanding lack of Stoicism is that it never had a really great leader. In its long history it had many great teachers, who, however, did their best work with arranging and reshaping the thoughts and ideas of others, but it had no great personality.[12] Stoicism dis-

[11] *Ibid.*, p. 347.

[12] Historians agree that the Stoics were the flower of the thought life of the civilizations of Western Asia and Europe. Stoicism had great minds, great philosophers, but it failed to

covered many of the laws of spiritual force, but it had no norm, nor did it ever conceive that one of the fundamental requirements of spiritual law is that it must have a personality through whom to function. Their beautiful teachings did not fructify in beautiful acts. Says C. Loring Brace: "Some of the most heartless acts of inhumanity recorded in ancient history are those of Stoics to their slaves. Cato deliberately gives permission to sell an old or sick slave. The following instance is related by Tacitus: "A wealthy citizen of Rome had pledged freedom to a slave and had broken his promise. The man, enraged and disappointed, assassinated his master. By law in such cases all the slaves under the same roof should be executed. The public duty in this case was discussed in the senate; and the celebrated Stoic, Cassius, defended the law and urged its enforcement. The slaves, all innocent, to the number of six hundred persons, were finally executed. Plutarch says that Flaminius put a slave to death merely to afford a spectacle to a guest who had never seen a man die. Cato, the Stoic, when he put one to death, used to take the opinion of all the others

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achieve all its eight hundred years promised because it had no outstanding leader. Likewise, Roman civilization was the flower of the civilization of the past. Rome failed to reach enduring power because it had no great leader in righteousness—no truly great spiritual leader. Roman culture, Roman justice, Roman law brought great benefits to the world. But Rome had no great lawgiver like Moses; no spiritual leader like Gautama Buddha; no moral teacher like Confucius, though they had many great philosophers; and no inspired—or possessed—prophetic organizer like Mohammed.

before killing him. The story of Pollio—also a Stoic—is well known as related by Seneca; how he amused himself by feeding his fish with fragments of his mutilated slaves. Many were furnished to the amphitheaters to be killed in public festivals. Old and infirm slaves were abandoned to die of hunger."[13] A great benign leader, whose life exemplified their exalted teachings, would have palliated many of these grosser inconsistencies of leading adherents of Stoicism if it had not altered their practices.

The one advantage that Christianity had against many of its seeming handicaps in the contest with Stoicism was an outstanding Personality. Christianity came to Rome not alone telling what was truth: that Roman citizens had already heard from others; but Christian teachers told of One who had perfectly lived the truth, and it told how the lives of even the weakest of men might approximate the truth.

The Early Christian Community in Europe

Christianity appears at its best when set in contrast with Roman degradation on one hand and the high state of perfection in philosophy and logic achieved by the Stoics on the other. To the slave in his misery, and to the sensualist in the bondage to his vices, Christianity brought not merely palliation, but life and hope, and gave present values for everyday living, no matter how painful and bitter the outward conditions of that living. To those who through the exalted teachings of

[13] "Gesta Christi," p. 47.

the Stoics gazed at the alluring heights of great truths, but saw them only as inaccessible mountain peaks, Christianity offered immediate entrance into a realm where life at its best was the hope and the active realization of every one therein.

Likewise the processes of early Christianity differed from those of the two great civilizing agencies about it. Both Stoicism and Roman law and government depended for their best results on the gradual working out and perfecting of their systems. Christianity made no provision for a gradual working out of her truths and doctrines. It expected immediate results through the influx of spiritual force into the individual lives of believers. This spiritual force was not to be obtained through the perfect comprehension of principles and truths, but through the life being put into the path of spiritual power through its peculiar relation to the personality of Jesus Christ.

While Christian civilization has been of slow growth through the centuries, Christian life was as near perfection in the first century A.D. as it has been in any period since. The transformations were so startling as to cause men to describe the Christian leaders as "men who had turned the world upside down." (Acts 17:6.) These transformations were in characters of individuals in different communities, and not in greatly changed political or social conditions. Paul, who knew only too well the social and moral conditions surrounding the little groups which made up the Churches he founded here and there, made no allowances whatever

for these conditions in the requirements to which he held those who became followers of Christ through his preaching. (Rom. 12:1ff.) Whatever hope Paul may have had of social or economic reforms he did not feel that the spiritual power which he sought to help others to possess was conditioned upon such reforms. In 1 Corinthians 13 Paul enumerates one after another of the virtues and graces of life, then asserts that if he had each one of these and all of them, but lacked love, these graces would avail him nothing. Paul was always proud of his Jewish lineage, but he did not consider that spiritual power was arrived at in this way. "For we are the circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God, . . . and have no confidence in the flesh: though I myself might have confidence even in the flesh: if any other man thinketh to have confidence in the flesh, I yet more; circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; as touching zeal, persecuting the church; as touching the righteousness which is in the law, found blameless. Howbeit what things were gain to me, these have I counted loss for Christ." (Phil. 3:3-7.)

Paul faithfully used the love norm set forth by Jesus. He proclaimed unwavering faith and love toward God, and pure and unselfish love toward men, including enemies. He ever held up Christ as the medium, or channel, through which their love should flow toward God and toward man, and through which spiritual power and blessing would flow back to them. And this

brand of Christianity, as we have noted, was working at the bottom of civilization, while Roman law and Stoic philosophy were working at the top. When Christianity reached a place where it was noticed by those at the top it had to endure from those powers which had the machinery of government at their command persecutions which were designed to extirpate it.

Because of its nature and its outcome, this contest of nearly three hundred years, and reaching into four centuries, is peculiarly helpful in revealing the nature and the power of our norm. On the side of the Christians there was nothing but spiritual force, as this force functioned through the lives of believers. On the side of their opponents were all the power and machinery that had been gotten together by the greatest government and the greatest philosophers of the world. Though it is scarcely probable that the contestants realized it, this was a conflict to the death. This decisive victory (at least in outward form) was gained when Emperor Constantine, in the second and third decades of the fourth century A.D., became an active Christian and proclaimed his a Christian empire. There is to be found in all this contest very little evidence of a serious conflict of ideas or religious views. The Christians were persecuted *because they were Christians* and not just because of what they did or what they taught. Their unswerving loyalty to Christ, their unwillingness to take part in the licentious and revolting sins which had become so common to all classes, and their contempt of other gods were the chief

charges against them. The one way of escape usually offered, but seldom accepted, was that of recanting their religion. This was no conflict between civil powers, nor yet between systems of philosophy. It was a conflict between the spiritual powers operating in the lives of Christians and all the forces of mind and matter that could be brought against them. Fisher says of this conflict: "It was the heroic age in the history of the Church, when, with no aid from an arm of flesh, the whole might of the Roman empire was victoriously encountered by the unarmed and unresisting adherents of the Christian faith. Imperial Rome, the conqueror of the world, was herself overcome by the bands of Christian disciples, whose meek but dauntless courage was more than a match for all her power."[14]

Results of This Doubtful Victory

After the "victory" gained through Constantine, Christianity spent over a thousand years dealing with matters of doctrine and ecclesiastical affairs in general. During this long period of time a few lofty Christian characters, of the contemplative type, were developed; some worth-while doctrinal and devotional literature was produced; and much that was worth while in art, painting, sculpture, and architecture was given to the world.[15] But far less progress was made in the use

[14] Fisher, *Ibid.*, p. 51.

[15] This is a broad generalization. Here and there during the dark centuries there were characters who were in touch with spiritual force. Near to the beginning of the period were such

of spiritual power, released through the norm given by Jesus, than had been made in the first three hundred years of the Church's life. Yet during these more than a thousand years all the intellectual contents of the norm were accepted by the Church. And Jesus, the Personality necessary for the perfect functioning of the norm, was accepted and fought over; but not used as the medium through whom spiritual power would flow into individual lives for definite, practical ends.

The results of the victory were therefore twofold:

First, it proved the strength and the victorious nature of spiritual power. With this power the weak, the despised, the enslaved of earth could conquer armies and kings. Through loving as Christ loved, hate was turned to love; and foes and cruel oppressors were transformed into helpful brethren. Since Christians conquered by love, their enemies would appreciate the power which overcame them and would seek this new and compelling force for themselves.

Second, the victory of spiritual power caused many to seek the benefits, the virtues, and the graces of Christianity without knowing or using the norm whereby spiritual force is released. Constantine's desire to have his kingdom become Christian, and to have all his

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men as Chrysostom, Jerome, and Augustine. And it was the work of such spiritual leaders as William of Occam, Wycliffe, Huss, Wessel, and Savonarola that prepared for the Reformation. With this last group should be classed such spiritually led people as the Mystics in Germany and the Netherlands, and writers such as William Langland, author of "Vision of Piers Plowman," Chaucer, and Erasmus.

subjects be like those whom Rome had persecuted and killed, was perfectly normal and natural. But adopting or assuming Christian graces and ethics is entirely different from having spiritual power flow into the life.

The long experiment in Christian civilization following Constantine's edict declaring his kingdom Christian is instructive. During this long period many sincere minds wrought earnestly with the intellectual concepts of Christianity, but the results were meager. Their sincerity and their tenacious fidelity to Christian orthodoxy did not put them into contact with any large amount of spiritual power. Christianity continued to grow in territorial extent, in numbers of adherents, in beauty of ceremonies, and in all that went with material wealth and power; but during these more than a thousand years it did not turn any worlds upside down, it did not transform any community—save only those transformed from life to death by the sword—nor did it produce the missionary spirit of the early centuries which sent men out to preach the gospel of love, even though such preaching might cost them their lives.

The worth and the availability of spiritual force was not in the least affected by this long period of disuse. There it was for use all the time, and the way to utilize it had been revealed, but it was thereby none the less valuable or available because of this neglect.

The conclusion seems obvious and inevitable: Spiritual force, like all other forces known to man, is governed by fixed and absolute laws and functions only in accordance with these laws.

CHAPTER VI

SPIRITUAL FORCE IN SOCIAL GROUPS

Spiritual force has been widely used for the accomplishing of ethical and religious objectives. Many such efforts have followed closely the standard of love to God and love to man as Christ loved.

The Republic of Geneva

The first serious attempt to carry spiritual laws and principles over into the organization of a Christian civil society was made under the influence of John Calvin at Geneva. The mistakes made by the leaders in this first Christian republic are easily discovered; but the principles which underlay this movement have been a powerful factor in the growth of civil liberty. Perhaps for the first time in history religion and civil affairs were separated. Calvin vindicated the right of the Church to function without interference from the State. "The separation of Church from State was the first step in the development of religious freedom."[1] His doctrine of the sovereignty of God which made each individual directly responsible for doing what God willed that he should do brought new dignity, power, and consciousness to the individual. Earthly potentates became less significant as men came to think of the almighty Ruler as entering directly into

[1] Fisher, "The History of the Christian Church," p. 329.

the affairs of everyday life. As men's minds went out to God as one who was directly concerned with their welfare, their minds went out also in the opposite direction to their fellow men who, like themselves, were objects of God's love and subject to his laws. Then, as the laws and principles of the government of this society were drawn from Christ's teachings and centered in the personality of Christ, we have here the beautiful terms of Christ's norm cast in a rather stern, legalistic form. However, though the norm was held in this somewhat uncompromising and unsympathetic form, spiritual power did flow through into individual lives, and into society, and a new principle of government was born.

Oberlin's Mountain Community

In 1767 Johann Frederich Oberlin, who was at that time twenty-seven years old, entered upon his duties as curate, or pastor, to the Churches in the Ban de la Roche, a wild district in the Vosges Mountains. These mountain people to whom he went to minister were ignorant, destitute of means of mental or social intercourse with people in the neighboring districts from whom they were separated by barriers of streams and mountains, and poor to the extent that they did not raise enough food for their actual needs. Further, their dialect was so provincial that they were limited by it almost to intercourse among themselves. They were an ignorant, semibarbarous, semisavage people, living in the crudest sort of dwellings, tilling the soil

in the crudest manner without implements, with no hope or ambition to do anything more than secure the scantiest supply of the bare necessities for their barren physical existence.

The people were scattered among the mountains, living in five different communities, or villages. When Oberlin arrived there were three churches supplying religious services in as many different communities. He visited and preached in one community, then in another. From the first his sermons stirred the people. They were not orations, nor were they doctrinal discourses, but simple, helpful applications of Bible truths. Opposition to him because of his preaching quickly arose. In one community a body of men banded together to waylay and severely chastise the preacher, believing that by so doing they would cause him to leave the parish. Oberlin heard of the plans, and on that Sunday morning he took for his text the Lord's admonition to turn the other cheek and emphasized the present-day application to this truth. The plotters smiled knowingly at each other as they wondered how the young preacher would live up to his own preaching. When these men were in a room together after the sermon making their final plans, Oberlin walked into the room and told them that he knew what they purposed to do and had come to deliver himself to them to save them from the disgraceful crime of an ambuscade. The men gave up their plans and became Oberlin's supporters. By preaching and living the simple

gospel principles Oberlin brought these crude people into touch with spiritual power.

But Oberlin was not a mere Sunday sermonizer. He employed the best attainments of science, philosophy, and religion to benefit his parishioners. Since he felt that one of their greatest needs was contact with other people, one of the first undertakings was road-building. He brought to the community the best methods of agriculture, teaching the people how to care for seed, plant and cultivate crops. He helped them to secure farm implements and taught them how to use them. He established schools and was both teacher and director of education. He planted trees, orchards, and taught the people how to build dwellings. He was interested in everything that concerned their lives, yet his relation to them and his attitude toward them was always that of a spiritual adviser.

For more than fifty years Oberlin led this community, but it was always as a spiritual leader that he worked. He was never a dictator, and the power which wrought the transformation was spiritual power. From extreme poverty the communities became prosperous, with good roads, bridges, pleasant homes, and plenty. From extreme ignorance with no schools, the school system of Ban de la Roche became a model, and educators from distant lands came to study it. From irreligion and semisavagery the people became devout, regular worshipers. From the cursing heard on every hand when he went there, the people became noted for their Bible study and their singing. A sight which

most gladdened the pastor's heart was to see the people sitting on their doorsteps on a Sunday evening, reading their Bibles and singing. Another mark of the people of the community was their philanthropy.

This seems to be almost a perfect sample of the beneficent effects of the functioning of spiritual power under normal conditions. Oberlin in his life met every condition of the norm. He sought in everything to know the will of God. His love for others was always so consuming that he preferred even his enemies' welfare to his own. Christ was to him a very present source of power as well as a perfect Example. The people of the parish followed their pastor faithfully in all things. Thus in this small isolated mountain community, with its limited material resources, spiritual force functioned in a degree unknown to most regions outside. The results were measured to them in material prosperity, in strength and beauty of character, in contentment, and in happiness. The secondary results were that the good things in the school system, in community government, and in methods of philanthropy were carried by others into other communities, and their benefits are now widespread and reach down to the present day.[2]

Mary Slessor of Calabar

Mary Slessor, a frail girl, who at the age of eleven went to work in a factory, where she toiled ten hours

[2] See "Oberlin's Memoirs" and Butler's "Life of Johann Frederich Oberlin."

a day for fourteen years, furnishes another example of what spiritual power can do through a life that meets the conditions of the spiritual norm. Her education and training for misionary work were through the study of her Bible and work in Sunday school and Church during these years of her factory toil. Calabar, the mission field to which Mary Slessor went, was one of the most difficult spots for a white woman to live and work to be found anywhere in the world. "Calabar exhibited the worst side of nature and man. While much of it was beautiful, it was one of the most unhealthy spots in the world—sickness, disease, and swift death attacking the Europeans who ventured there. The natives were considered to be the most degraded of any in Africa. They were in reality the slum-dwellers of Negro-land. From time immemorial their race had occupied the equatorial region of the continent, a people without a history, with only a past of confused movement, oppression, and terror." [3]

Into the midst of these ignorant, superstitious, and degraded people Mary Slessor went alone. For nearly four decades she lived and worked among them. With little or no aid from political powers, with very limited funds for educational purposes, the transformations resulting from her efforts were marvelous. "She laid the foundation of civilized order in Okoyong, upon which regular Church and school life has now been sucessfully built. . . . And to-day—1914, the year of her death—there exist throughout the district nearly

[3] W. P. Livingston's, "Mary Slessor of Calabar," p. 15.

fifty churches and schools in which the work is being carried on carefully and methodically by trained minds. The membership numbers nearly fifteen hundred, and there is a large body of candidates and inquirers and over two thousand scholars. . . . One cannot estimate the value of her general influence on the natives; it extended over an area of more than two thousand square miles, from all parts of which they came to seek her help and advice, whilst her fame reached even to Northern Nigeria, where she was spoken of as the 'good White Ma who lived alone.' To West Africans a woman is simply a chattel to be used for pleasure and gain, but she gave them a new conception of womanhood and gained their confidence and obedience. . . . Through her womanhood she gave them some idea of the religion which could make that womanhood possible." [4]

From the time when Mary Slessor at a very early age was converted, until the time of her death, the motivating and sustaining power of her life was spiritual. Through her spiritual power functioned through a personality which had in a very high degree achieved a full realization of the love standard.

The results of missionary work on the whole must be attributed to spiritual force working through personalities which have achieved, in a greater or a less degree, the norm. This progress cannot be attributed either to evolution or to the natural force of ideas. As we have already discovered—perhaps we should

[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 343, 344.

say, as we have already admitted the claims of opponents—there are few, if any, great new ideas in the teachings of Jesus. He simply reorganized these teachings so that spiritual power could enter unhindered into human activities. This is what the missionary, following him, has been doing and is still doing. The beneficial results, then, cannot be attributed alone to education or to Western civilization. These forces are only incidental. Christian missions among needy people from first to last have been motivated by spiritual power; the results are spiritual.

Sunday Schools

The great Sunday school movement, which is recognized to be a potent factor for good in our present-day civilization, was spiritually conceived and has been so conducted throughout its history. Educators, statesmen, judges, and leaders in almost every walk of life recognize the worth of the Sunday school. Nowhere else is there found a record to equal that of the hundreds of thousands of Sunday school teachers giving voluntarily and freely each week of their time to teach others. All this host of workers more or less clearly recognize the norm for the functioning of spiritual power. The movement is not doctrinal, nor philosophical, nor primarily ethical; it is religious—spiritually religious. The laws which direct and regulate its movements are spiritual. Its results in the characters of those who come under its influence are such

as: "Loyalty, courage, patience, humility, freedom, and generosity."

Measured by the various standards of efficiency which are often applied to it, the Sunday school is woefully weak.[5] Measured by spiritual standards, the Sunday school is a vital force. Though it is recognized that the Sunday school is a good place for children and youth, and perhaps less generally recognized as a good place for every one, yet the Sunday school is not recommended primarily for what one can get out of it for himself. The values sought are primarily for the unself, or others. Those who study in the Sunday school are learning how they may better train themselves to serve humanity. Those working in the Sunday school are doing it for others. The giving—though it may well be small from the standpoint of the individual, it is enormous in the aggregate—is largely for others. Furthermore, Sunday school at-

[5] A two-volume work (probably more to follow), "The Indiana Survey," sets forth in detail the merits and failures of the Sunday schools of Indiana and also gives detailed instructions as to the proper pedagogical methods by which these schools can be made what they should be. A large volume, "The Sunday School Movement and the American Sunday School Union," gives a detailed history of the Sunday school from its inception. The pedagogical and the historical approaches are valuable to a full understanding of the Sunday school and to the best use of it, but the full worth of this movement cannot be ascertained by these methods. The fruits of the Sunday schools are spiritual and come forth in character in the lives of those touched by them. The fact that a Sunday school has wrought righteousness in a community by transforming the characters of individuals is the best proof of its worth.

tendance is without compulsion, save in instances where parents insist on their children going. No civil or ecclesiastical compulsion is back of the millions who each Sunday attend Sunday school. The programs, however widely they differ, are almost universally spiritual. Consciously or unconsciously, the lessons taught follow quite closely the three fundamental parts of our norm: Love to God, and love to man, as Christ loved.

Y. M. C. A. and Y. W. C. A.

Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Associations have performed a distinct service in the world. They have brought spiritual life and realities into the realm of young life. While these associations did not rob religion of its mysticism, they showed to young people the humanness and the present-day worth of spiritual forces. Perhaps the movements have been injured by the many who have sought purely the material benefits offered by these associations. But if the movements have erred in dealing too much with material benefits, they have erred because of their unselfish desire to serve others.

Young People's Societies

From the Society of Christian Endeavorers started in 1881 to the various Youth Movements of to-day in different parts of the world, the purpose and force back of these movements are largely spiritual. The common thought running through all these movements, whether or not they are primarily religious in their out-

ward form, is the unself. The two great forces they are dealing with are principles and personalities, and there are no greater forces than these. If the principles are not always the principles of our norm, and if the central personality is not always Jesus Christ, they are always striving toward the perfect. Wisely guided, the young people of the world will accept the love standard and use the spiritual forces released thereby, because they have not ruled spiritual phenomena out of their lives.

The Quakers

It would be instructive to study the various groups and societies of spiritually-minded people who at different times and in different places have bound themselves together to cultivate certain spiritual graces and to give their lives to the observance of certain spiritual laws. A brief study of the Quakers, or the Society of Friends, one of the largest of these groups, must suffice. Their history dates back to about the middle of the seventeenth century. George Fox, the founder, seems to have had no thought or desire to establish a new cult. He claims to have had a vision of how "every man was enlightened by the divine light of Christ," and he desired that every man should possess this light. This "light within" and the direct guidance of the Spirit, which dwells within, are cardinal principles of their teaching. The sacraments and ceremonies which have gathered around religious services they reject, and Fox declared that the Bible was with-

out binding authority, but that it should be read invariably by the light of the Spirit. Yet they have gone farther in their efforts to live the teachings of the Bible than have some who even assert that the Bible was verbally inspired. It was Fox's literal interpretation of Christ's command, "Swear not at all," which led to their refusal to take oaths in court or elsewhere. The literal interpretation of the commandment, "Thou shalt not kill," still keeps Quakers from going to war. Since all men share in this "inner light," they practiced from the beginning an equality in all things, even to giving women an equal place with men in their meetings, a thing unheard of at that early date. Likewise this belief led them to consider slavery wrong. For this same reason of the "inner light" being shared by all, the Quakers had no written creeds, they rejected music and all aids which art could give to religious services, and their meetinghouses were built as simply as possible.

These their fundamental principles have marked the career of the Quakers as a distinct people. The name stands for certain definite things. Dr. J. H. Jowett, in a sermon some years ago, struck off a phrase, "the Quaker face." These simple principles have set their stamp in the faces of those living by them. They accepted certain spiritual laws and adhered to those laws; and even if they did not observe all the spiritual laws, they have reaped a full reward for all the laws which they have observed. They accepted and were guided by the "light within," and the serenity of their lives

has been marked in their faces. Because they thought all men equal and considered it wrong to use force even against an enemy, they have been singularly at peace with all men. They grew spiritually along the spiritual lines which they followed. The spiritual seeds which they planted and cultivated grew into the spiritual harvest which they have reaped and are reaping.

However, although they have always spoken consistently against human slavery, slavery was ended by means of which they disapprove. They have declared for equality among all men, yet the great movements toward human brotherhood are furthered by Sunday schools, young people's societies, fraternities, and now by such governmental agencies as the League of Nations, and such like agencies, none of which, to say the least, owe anything for their existence to the Quakers. The spiritual fields which the Quakers assiduously cultivated bore fruit, even though they totally neglected other fields. But the neglected fields did not bear fruit for them regardless of their spiritual grace. Though among the best-organized and most purposeful of the groups which sought sanctuary on the American shores, the Quakers did not take as large part in shaping the spiritual destiny of the new land as might have been expected. They had able leaders, such as William Penn, John Woolman, John Archdale, and John Greenlief Whittier, who guided the spiritual and political courses of the group; but leaders like Roger Williams, Whitefield, the Wesleys, Tennant, Witherspoon, Finney, Brooks, Beecher, and Moody largely shaped the

spiritual life of the nation. The Quakers alone of all who settled in the wilderness were able to live with the Indian in peace; but it remained for others to push back the frontiers, establish homes, schools, and churches, and the orderly processes of Christian society.

The results achieved by this deeply spiritual group are of high order. That they did not take a yet larger part in the spiritual development of this country is no doubt due to the fact that their spiritual program was not broader. They followed definite spiritual laws and achieved the very definite results to which these laws lead. They furnished a definite channel for spiritual force, and as far as spiritual force was led by this channel results followed. A scientist working in metallurgy does not get results in botany. Anyone can get the same results the Friends do by following the same spiritual laws they do; and the Quakers can get spiritual results they do not now achieve by following spiritual laws which lead to these results.

The history of the Society of Friends in this country illustrates the working of spiritual forces still further. Always their voice has been against injustice, oppression, and for equal rights and human brotherhood. Though they opposed the means of war by which the slave was freed, their consistent protest against slavery had much to do with creating the consciousness which made the freeing of the black race in America inevitable. For half a century no issue rallied the Quakers to the support of their peculiar tenets. Though still ardent advocates of peace, they, along with millions of

others, had come to look upon a great war as impossible. Says Prof. Rufus M. Jones: "When the Great War burst upon the world in the summer of 1914, Friends in America were not spiritually prepared to give adequate interpretation of the ground and basis of their faith, nor were they clearly united upon a plan of action suited to and corespondent with their ideals of life. For more than 250 years this body of Christian people had adhered to an interpretation of Christianity which called for a way of life the practice of which was utterly incompatible with the spirit and method of war. The difficulty had been that this 'way of life' was often held in a nominal and traditional fashion and not vitally and freshly thought out in an up-to-date manner." [6]

Though the Quakers floundered for a time following the first shock of the war, they speedily found themselves. Their spiritual conceptions sprang into new life. They found new meaning in their teachings. Though the stress of circumstances led many young Quakers to enter the army, their old principles held most of them together and set them to work along humanitarian lines for all those suffering from the scourge of war. Soon they were in the very forefront of those administering relief and were being spiritually revived to carry on the spiritual work started by their founders. By the time the armistice was signed the Friends were ready to push into Germany, Russia, and Poland with their offer of Christian brotherhood and

[6] "A Service of Love in War Time," p. 3.

helpfulness. The relief and humanitarian work accomplished by this small group following the war surpasses any like achievement in the world's history. "As we review the achievements of the Quakers in the past decade, we are constrained to cry out: 'Truly, this is a remarkable people, practicing our preaching and realizing our ideals.'" [7]

In accomplishing their humanitarian work the Quakers have, either consciously or unconsciously, followed the spiritual standard of love to God and love to man as Christ loved.

Conclusions

1. Spiritual force can be relied upon to accomplish definite results in a social group whenever the laws governing the force are complied with.

2. The more nearly the conditions of the love standard are complied with the higher will be the grade of spiritual results obtained.

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[7] Lester M. Jones, "Quakers in Action," p. 211.

CHAPTER VII

AUTHORITY FOR RELIGION AND ETHICS

If religion is but an ideal, more or less valuable at different stages of intellectual development; and if ethics is nothing more than codified rules of society, governing the actions of individuals and social groups —then no authority is needed for either. But if religion is a fundamental human experience, actually or potentially, and if ethics and morals are attributes of human consciousness, then each must spring from some authority, or rest upon authority.

This matter of authority cannot be brushed aside by declaring that the religious and moral sanctions of former ages do not hold to-day. Unfortunately most discussion of the subject is concerned with the inadequacy of these old sanctions and prohibitions. Suppose one convinces himself that there is no hell, and that he has no need to fear future punishments. Must he conclude that worship is a waste of time and that truth and virtue are but figments of the imagination? What if it is proved to one's satisfaction that all religious dogmas and all moral sanctions are wrong or without foundation, must one therefore conclude that religion and morals are without authority?

This ground has all been thoroughly covered by careful, well-equipped workers in the past. It is said that Kant began his studies in order to defend and estab-

lish the religious dogmas and the moral sanctions of his day. But in the end he accomplished the very opposite to that which he started out to attain. He showed that no sure foundation for either morals or religion can be based upon experience or upon dogmas. He broke away from empiricism and tried to found morals and religion upon pure rationalism.

But rationalism itself lacks satisfying stability and cannot satisfactorily explain rational processes. Kant clearly saw this and was led thereby to postulate God and immortality. What he destroyed by pure reason he found it necessary to restore for practical moral ends. Kant considered his system essentially Christian; but his God was only a philosophical or hypothetical God, necessary to complete his rationalistic system. And Kant held that both morals and religion were essential to man's well-being. Pure reason cannot furnish proof of the existence of God; but morals and religion, which are race essentials, require a God for their perfect realization, therefore a God must be supplied. If even a hypothetical God is required to completely explain morals, may not God have a closer connection with, and be more responsible for, morals than Kant was willing to accept?

Kant based moral authority upon a categorical imperative which, as he conceived it, was the absolute claim of the moral law to our obedience; the legal supremacy of the right as asserted by conscience. But each free agent produces his own categorical imperatives which bind him and him alone. However, Kant's

reasoning carried farther. Right and duty seen by one are also seen by other good people. He assumed that correct maxims would be recognized and accepted by all honest, free minds, regardless of previous beliefs and experiences. This assumption seems necessary. If truth and right cannot be recognized by free minds, then they must have foundation in experience, in authority, or in history; and Kant showed that such foundation is impossible.

By his thorough study Kant did much for every student who would understand the subjects of morals and religion. His conclusion that morals and religion are essential to man's well-being argues that they are fundamentals in our nature. We are moral and we are religious because we are moral and religious. We cannot prove God by reason, but since God is essential to man's highest development man must have God in his scheme of things.

However, it seems much easier to find authority for morals and religion in spiritual force than to draw it from a categorical imperative. The authority for the water in the stream flowing down to the sea rests in the physical forces which control the water. There will always be problems for engineers to solve in directing and controlling the flow of water, but the authority for the water flowing will always remain the same. So, if authority for morals and religion rests in spiritual forces, we make progress in their use through better acquaintance with spiritual forces and their laws.

It is not so much a matter of how man reaches moral

conclusions as that he reaches them. Concerning a certain matter James may hold one view, John may hold an exactly opposite view, while Henry may be firmly convinced that both are wrong and that he alone is right. By knowing all the facts in each case we could arrive fairly accurately at the whys and wherefores for the conclusions each of these has reached. But *how* each reached a conclusion is of less importance to us than that each *did reach* a conclusion. Kant saw that when even one man achieved a moral sense God was made necessary. There has to be a foundation, or authority, back of morals and religion, or they will cease to have force; indeed, without the authority back of them they could not have been, any more than there could be a stream without water.

Using Spiritual Forces

Spiritual forces neither increase nor decrease, nor do they change. All spiritual force available for man now, or all that ever will be available, has been available through man's life upon earth. But these forces are released for man's use only when the laws governing them are brought into proper operation through conditions having been fulfilled. When Jesus entered upon his work people noted that he spoke and acted with authority. Whether he was teaching the multitude or raising the dead he spoke and acted as one who knew absolutely the forces he was using and knew that he had authority to use them. He did not put the sick and maimed off with such weak asurances as, "If God

wills he can make you whole," or "If you have faith God can heal you." He said simply, but with authority, "Be thou whole."

Jesus at no time claimed that he had in his possession or at his control spiritual forces which had not existed for man's use before. In many ways he encouraged his disciples to believe that they could use the forces as he used them. To an amazed group he said at one time: "Greater works than these" shall be done by one who believes on me. He specifically commanded his followers to perform acts of healing. It is not possible for one to read the New Testament without concluding that Jesus expected his followers to use spiritual forces for the betterment of the race. By example and by teaching he gave instruction as to how these forces were to be used. The accounts of what he did and what he taught seem to leave no doubt about his expectations. He believed that he had shown the way to the practical use of spiritual forces.

That the use of these forces is not fully—at least not widely—understood after nineteen hundred years is often set forth as proof that Jesus' spiritual conceptions were either wrong or impractical. The President of the United States has the authority to declare and the power to prosecute war; yet only five of our Presidents have ever exercised these prerogatives. Power is not always conditioned by its use or by the knowledge man possesses of it.

Potentially Abraham might have made his journey from Mesopotamia to Palestine by airplanes. All the

known forces of aëronautics were actively or potentially operative then. All that would have been required of Abraham that he might have transported his vast entourage across the desert as on the wings of birds was to use the forces and obey the laws then in existence. Sublimely ignorant of the mighty forces about him, Abraham, as many another since his day, labored prodigiously for many months over a journey which, if available forces had been used, would have been, at the most, but a matter of days, and on the whole a pleasurable rather than a wearisome event. All that man now knows about flying would make it difficult to transport such a company as went with the Hebrew pioneer, and all their possessions, but we know it could have been done. We know further that, if the forces were perfectly understood, such an accomplishment could be achieved easily and without undue hazard. The authority for the use of these forces lies in the knowledge of them.

For long spiritual force was looked upon as erratic and uncontrollable magic. One person influenced another, but did it by a "hant" or by casting some spell. Persons were torn by emotions or forces within them, and it was considered that they were possessed of a demon. Jesus used and controlled these forces not by magic, or because he was "the prince of devils," but through understanding the forces and knowing their laws. The love standard into which Jesus infused his personality is authoritative, because it is based upon knowledge of spiritual forces.

However, spiritual force operates because conditions are met, and not because perfect knowledge of the force has been arrived at. An automobile may be driven sixty miles an hour by one who knows not the first principle of the mechanics which make the car go. But in the spiritual realm mere knowledge of forces and laws does not release power. The personality of the one who would operate spiritual forces must be a part of the standard. The personality becomes a part of the spiritual force.

One cannot use spiritual force objectively upon another, as, for instance, one uses a weapon, or even as one may bring into action legal machinery to compel one to do a certain act. The Christian missionaries in China during the recent disturbances have recognized this principle when they have asked not to be protected by the armed forces of their respective countries. Spiritual force cannot have its authority resting on gunboats. Jesus's teachings against the use of force have wrongly been thought of as counseling a policy of nonresistance. They are not. They set forth the principles of active contention of spiritual force against wrong.

We cannot use spiritual force objectively to destroy others; or even to better them, as a steam shovel is used to beautify a landscape. We cannot call fire down from heaven to destroy an enemy or to consume a wicked community; but spiritual forces functioning through us may bring about in an enemy and in a community changes far more desirable than could be

wrought by fire. Since we do not become channels for the operating of spiritual forces until we love God and our fellow men, it is apparent that we will never be able to do harm with the spiritual forces with which Jesus was seeking to acquaint his followers.

The Problem of Evil[1]

Doubtless evil belongs to the spiritual realm and must in some way be identified with spiritual force. Even if we accept Plato's scheme of "ideas" and his view that there is a principle of goodness or perfection manifesting itself in all that there is, and that evil is only a condition of imperfection in the process of attaining the ideal of perfection, we still must look upon evil as spiritual. And evil must have authority for its existence and for the spiritual force it uses. If evil is looked upon as being under the control of an all-wise, omnipotent Creator-God, its authority is derived from the same source from which comes authority for the good. If evil is a spiritual force uncontrolled by God, then it must have a source of authority outside of God.[2]

The problem of evil touches our subject and is more or less vexing at many turns, but it does not vitally affect moral and religious standards or measuring lines. It is an obstruction, a hindrance to the attainment of moral and religious goals, and must be met by spiritual force. If we have the right standard for the perfect

[1] Wright, "A Student's Philosophy of Religion," pp. 370ff.

[2] Hornlé, "Idealism as a Philosophy," p. 312.

functioning of spiritual force, evil cannot keep us from the goal of spiritual perfection.

However, from the evil can be drawn a valuable contribution both as to authority in religion and morals and as to a dependable spiritual standard. Evil is not just minus good; neither is it a state less than the best. Evil is recognized by all men as a distinct state or as a spiritual force separate and distinct from other spiritual forces. Evil is feared, not because it stands for something inferior, but because it is thought of as that which has power to harm.

Primitive man peopled all nature about him with spirits, and all those he did not understand or know to be his allies he considered evil. His conceptions were crude and due very largely to ignorance, but something in his nature enabled him to sense the unfriendly presence of spiritual enmity. At different times in his career Jesus cried out against the oppressive atmosphere about him created by his evil-minded enemies. In his home town of Nazareth he could do no mighty work because of this. More and more often toward the end of his ministry he denounced the Jerusalem leaders for being in league with their father, the devil. He charged that their thoughts and actions sprang from the evil one; and that, because of their being thus in league with Satan, they could not understand what Jehovah God was speaking through him.

Plainly Jesus taught that the authority for the evil acts of his enemies rested in a spiritual power of evil which his opponents ignorantly served. So long as

they gave themselves to this power they would continue to do evil and hate the good.

The ability of a conscious ego to distinguish evil, and to consider it harmful and dangerous, is another step in establishing a definite spiritual standard. An innate fear of evil is equally as strong a proof of a spiritual dividing line as is hunger for contact with deity, or desire for a state of moral rightness.

One can have no stronger proof of evil than to be conscious of the presence of evil. Who has not at some time felt this consciousness so strongly as to be depressed by the feeling? Perhaps he did not know just the one from whom this repressive spiritual force emanated, but of the presence of evil he was certain. A spiritual perception of good and of evil establishes, at least in that instance, a moral dividing line and strongly suggests that there may be but one spiritual measuring line for all spiritual life.

Union of Morals and Religion

In every age up until our present so-called scientific age, morals and religion were united, or so closely related that they might naturally have sprung from one source and have been subject to one authority. In fact, most religious and ethical systems of the past were so interrelated that the ruin of the one would have been the ruin of the other. Even though Confucius and the Stoics had no particular need for religion to support their ethical systems, they did not

object to religion and the gods appropriating their morals for themselves.

However, common as this union was in past systems, the basis for it was seldom secure, and it did not always promote the highest good of society. So when the union was finally called into question, there were many to call for an immediate and final separation. So many dividing lines between religion and ethics were suddenly discovered that the wonder was that they had ever been united. So deep have some of these lines of cleavage become that some religious workers consider ethics, as taught outside of religious influence, a hindrance to religion; while some teachers of ethics pronounce religion archaic, a heritage from the past which must be sloughed off before man can reach a high ethical state.

This conflict is by no means ended, but the present present tendency is toward reuniting these two great forces which have had much to do with man's growth.[3] Perhaps among the most significant of these tendencies is the way morals and religion have been brought together for condemnation because they did not prevent the Great War. The ethical systems which brought on that great catastrophe, and the religious systems which were unable to prevent it or to stop it after it was started, have been soundly condemned. Science has not been criticized for not having prevented the war, nor was it ever expected to stop it. Science con-

[3] Wright, *Ibid.*, pp. 54, 55; Drake, "Problems of Religion," p. 332ff.; Galloway, "The Philosophy of Religion," p. 265.

tributed much toward making the war hideous, and it furnished relief to those who were torn and tortured by the diabolical agents it turned loose; but no one hoped then, and no one hopes now, that science will end war. Civilization expects better things of ethics and religion than a devastating war. It may not know how war is to be ended, but it still hopes that ethics and religion may lead the way. The uniting of these two age-old forces for condemnation for what they did not do, and turning to them for what civilization yet hopes may be done, reveal the place they are given by both opponents and supporters.

Confucianism and Stoicism are spoken of as moral; while Buddhism and Christianity are in all essentials religious. Yet the differences between these two systems are slight, and their similarities are very great, and in every case the authority back of them is a spiritual force outside the system itself.

The difference between the religious man and his moral neighbor next door is not easy to distinguish at all times. But it is universally conceded that the moral man must do right even though he is not religious, and that the religious man must be at least as moral as his neighbor who does not claim to be religious. Likewise it is conceded that both the moral man and the religious man have something which the immoral and the openly godless do not have. The religious man founds his system upon God; the moral man upon right, or duty, purely spiritual values. Thus morals and religion are united at their source in spiritual force.

Jesus's Conception of Morals and Religion

Jesus conceived religion and morals to be spiritual powers, both operating through discoverable laws and functioning through personality. He did not follow old philosophies by seeking a foundation for his truth, but began by saying: "I am the truth." He never attempted to prove his statements or establish foundations. As an electrician, thoroughly grounded in his science, Jesus proceeded to use spiritual power for ends which he sought to achieve. It is plain from his teaching that he never thought of them as separate and distinct forces. He denounced in severest terms the Pharisees who sought such separation. Religion and morals, the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man,[4] he always sets forth as inseparable. His teachings and the standards he gave were for both fields. To love God and man as Christ loved means that our lives are functioning in the realm of the spirit, and in this scientific age we are not entirely at home in the spiritual realm.

Science has taken from the spiritual realm what it thinks it needs for its own system and calls what it

[4] Jesus presented the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man as inseparable; indeed, as necessarily complementary and supplementary to each other. Without the Fatherhood of God, which culminated in his kingdom of God teachings, his theory of the brotherhood of man would have no foundation. Those who attempt to use Jesus's moral teachings separate from his religious views do violence even to his moral precepts. Jesus even made being willing to do the will of God a condition to the full understanding of his teachings. (John 7: 17.)

has thus taken ethics. According to its views, ethics is separated from religion and belongs to the practical and material rather than to the spiritual realm. Though this experiment has been in operation for a comparatively short time, it has operated long enough to indicate that there it nothing better to hope for from it than from the similar attempts made by Confucius and the Stoics.

Perhaps the entire subject would be clarified if both the term religion and the term "ethics," and also "morals," should be given up and we dealt only with the term "spiritual life." While we think of mental and physical life, we think of but one life; these two expressions are not antagonistic or exclusive. There is even less reason to separate morals and religion. If they are attributes or expressions of one spiritual life, their authority must be the same, though they be thought of as representing different phases of the same spiritual life.

CHAPTER VIII

THE INDIVIDUAL THE SPIRITUAL UNIT

It is significant that Jesus did not establish any organization, or formulate a system of dogmas to govern the spiritual order which he gave his life to establish. He spent the major part of his efforts upon his small group of disciples, and he dealt with these as individuals and not as a group. The only apparent unity in this group was their individual attachment to their Teacher; and it appears that even up to the very last this attachment was not unmixed, at least in the minds of some of these men, with thoughts of personal material gain. Whatever Jesus meant his Church to be, it seems certain that he did not have in mind the establishment of a dogmatic or legalistic institution. In that Church the individual—and certainly not Peter alone—would have a large place: the individual would be the spiritual unit.

Individual responsibility to God was not entirely a new conception among the Hebrews. Isaiah had set this idea forth, and Jeremiah had made it almost the heart of his prophecies. This idea had a large place in the teaching of Gautama Buddha; and there were at least flashes of it in other religions. But Jesus gave this conception the turning which made it unique and forceful. According to his teaching, the individual is the spiritual unit. Spiritual force increases as these

units are forced into social groups, but the individual is still the unit and the channel for the force.

The Sense of Guilt

There may be a sense in which it would be correct to say that a group, or a community, felt guilty for some wrongdoing or for some remissness of civic duty. But guilt is fundamentally a matter of the individual consciousness. The sense of guilt and sin can be traced far back toward the beginnings of human consciousness. Even when it was thought of as a tribal or community matter, it was experienced by the individual for his group. As religion developed this sense of individual guilt increased. Indeed, it seems almost a redundancy to speak of individual guilt. It would be, perhaps, more accurate to say that with the development of religion the individual became more conscious of guilt because of sin; and he became more intelligent in his efforts to be freed from this consciousness. In "A Babylonian Prayer to the Goddess Ishtar" we have this wail: "Painfully I wail! My sighs are many, my sickness is great! O my lady, teach me what to do, appoint me a resting place! My sins forgive, lift up my countenance."[1]

Says Prof. William Newton Clarke: "Guilt is the personal blameworthiness that follows the commission of sin. . . . Such is the guilt, for example, of murder. It is not mere liability to the punishment of murder:

[1] Dr. George A. Barton, "Archæology and the Bible," third edition, p. 398.

. . . the guilt consists rather in the fact that the man, wherever he is, and whatever he is doing, sleeping or waking, working or playing, following his favorite pursuits or kissing his innocent children, is the man who has murdered another." [2]

It is impossible for the guilty to free himself from his guilt. A debtor may pay his debt, or another may pay it for him, and he is free. But guilt cannot be thus easily erased. The guilty may forget his guilt, or if he remembers it he may never think about it. But the matter is not ended. He is still guilty, and in the process which leads up to his holding it so lightly that he forgets it something has happened in his inmost nature from which he never can be entirely free. Sin does leave its mark. Doubtless the sense of sin and guilt is largely a matter of religion and ethics; but religion and ethics are fundamentals of human nature. We are conscious of sin and guilt because we are human; the brute creation appears to be untroubled by the finger of conscience pointing accusingly. The higher one's conception of virtue, duty, and righteousness, the more sensitive the conscience and the more quickly and deeply will one feel the sense of guilt.

Though religion increases the sensitiveness to sin and the feeling of guilt, it also offers the only release from the sense of guilt which arises from a consciousness of sin. Psychoanalysis and psychotherapy have done much to banish the sense of guilt and failure which arises from repression or introspection. But

[2] "An Outline of Christian Theology," p. 246.

for the sense of guilt which comes from consciousness of sin there needs to be a cleansing spiritual process which has both authority and power behind it. Shakespeare convincingly portrays a soul in the terrors of guilt in "Macbeth." Lady Macbeth tries all the usual expedients to blot out the blood stains, but the sense of guilt only increases as she adds sin to sins. Lady Macbeth did not try bringing her bloodstained hands under revealing and cleansing spiritual force.

A rather lengthy quotation from Principal F. R. Barry's "Christianity and Psychology" should be clarifying:

> There are many obstacles to power and freedom which have to be passed on the journey to selfhood, but few so difficult as the sense of guilt. Few things so disintegrate our lives (by repression and dissociation), and so paralyze our effort for the future, as self-reproach and remorse about the past. All psychologists would agree in this, even if they should hold, as those must hold who adopt a thoroughgoing determinism, that the sense of guilt is itself a delusion of which psychological treatment can relieve us. Delusion or not, the sense of guilt is a fact of universal experience; and all religions above the primitive level have ever sought for ways of relief from it, as the condition of effective living. It was by a profound intuition into the deepest needs of human life, as well as understanding of God's character, that saints and spiritual experts have always insisted upon penitence and pardon as preliminaries of moral progress. We can see now the soundness of their psychology. For not only is the sense of guilt the great disturber of our inner peace, but, also, by laws of suggestion, the memory of wrongdoing haunting the mind is itself a temptation to repeat it. Thus sin which we believe to be unforgiven is a potent cause of temptation. So that the belief that one can be

forgiven, however that belief may be acquired and on whatever grounds it may be accepted, is itself of first-rate psychological importance. As remorse must paralyze our moral energies, so the belief that we have been forgiven (if such belief can in any way be won) will be one of the chief ways of setting us free.

There is no doubt that to tell some one else about the repressed secret which is haunting us will itself be one of the ways of setting us free. To dig up the hidden complex so that the patient is no longer haunted by it is often enough to restore his life to unity. In line with modern methods of psychologists is the old religious practice of confession. It is older by far, of course, than Christianity, and was widely taught in the Hellenistic world. . . . Plainly, if the man haunted by remorse has recourse to confession to obtain relief, what he wants is not merely good advice. He wants to know that he has been forgiven. . . . If a man is oppressed by a sense of guilt which is really guilt in the court of conscience, then it is Christian forgiveness which can best set his moral energies free. Guilt is the great repressor of psychic freedom. First, because, from the religious standpoint, it puts us out of right relations with the divine source of power. Secondly, because, on psychological grounds, it leads to conflict and repression, and all the waste of power which this involves. So it was that in dealing with physical sickness Jesus began by the promise of forgiveness.

It is Jesus who can bring us this release. For he brings near to us a forgiving God of whose forgiveness we may be assured by the gift of fresh opportunities of service. For psychology here agrees with Christianity that deliverance or redemption is completed by losing ourselves again in eager service rather than by merely passive experience, or a transaction performed outside ourselves.[3]

Guilt is disapproval of self and is therefore repres-

[3] Pp. 82, 83; 86, 87.

sive. It clogs the channel and prevents cleansing and building spiritual force entering the life. David, in alluding to his sin with Bathsheba and having caused the death of Uriah, said: "When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long. For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer. I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin." (Ps. 32:3-5.) In this picturesque language we have set before us the repressive, retarding, clogging force of guilt. "Bones wax old," and life forces are dried up. Guilt must be got rid of before life can resume its normal functions and expand upward and outward. David sets forth also how to get rid of guilt. He confessed his guilt, and his sin was forgiven.

Psychology has analyzed this process, given names to cause and effect, and charted different steps in the progress toward the desired freedom, but it has discovered nothing new, so far as the reality goes. So long as guilt points an accusing finger at self, the self is repressed, loses its power and its happiness; progress in the character ceases and retrogression sets in. If spiritual health is to be restored, this clog—guilt—must be removed from the channel that life-giving spiritual power may flow back. Confession removes the obstruction.

Spiritual Force in Individuals

The individual life is the channel of spiritual force. Guilt does its retarding in the individual, confession of sin is individual, and the realization of forgiveness is individual. Every great religion, with the possible exception of Confucianism, has assured spiritual blessings and benefits to the individual. The spiritual forces that have moved upon the world have moved through individuals. Mass religious movements, such as took place under the political move instituted by Constantine and under certain leaders of Mohammedanism, can scarcely be said to have been spiritual movements. Under such movements no spiritual force was released, and no new life began. Jesus of Nazareth expended most of his efforts in training a small group of personal followers. He died before his ideals or the spiritual force that was in him had made much of an impact upon the civilization in which he had lived; yet in death he was confident that the spiritual force with which he had worked would accomplish the ends which he had sought to accomplish through those individuals that had become channels for this force. Jesus believed in the individual, and none was too lowly to gain his interest and his aid. He seemed to know instantly the spiritual status of each individual he met. He offered no blanket prescription guaranteed to bring instant spiritual health to all. He had no stock remedies for the spiritual—or the physical—ills of his day. In each recorded instance where he dealt with a spiritual condition he sought to remove the ob-

struction which prevented the free flow of spiritual force in the life.

Doubtless the teachings of Jesus, like those of most of the other great religious teachers, had a strong eschatological note in them. Yet he always dealt with the spiritual needs of the one before him with a view to bringing that one immediately to normal spiritual health. The sinner was to be redeemed that he might enjoy spiritual health. The clogging, paralyzing sense of guilt was to be removed that the life might become immediately a channel for spiritual force. The effect of the impact of these teachings seems to have been the consciousness of new spiritual power, of spiritual force come to the aid of the one who had been in need.[4] To his disciples Jesus said: "You shall receive power, after the Holy Spirit is come upon you." (Acts 1: 8.) The book of Acts and the Epistles give accounts of this enduement and tell something of what these early Christians did under the influence of this spiritual power.

The chief interest of the New Testament centers around lives which were dominated by a spiritual force within them. Man will always be more concerned with the manifestation, or the operation, of spiritual force

[4] Dean Inge, "The Life of Devotion," p. 31. "There is therefore no substitute for first-hand experience in the spiritual life. We must believe the explorers of the high places of the unseen world when they tell us that they have been there and found what they sought.

in human life than he will be with theological dogmas.[5] As Professor Clarke has pointed out, "the Trinity that came first to Christian thought was the trinity of manifestation, or operation. Before there was any recognition of three in one, there was distinct knowledge of three manifestations or activities of God."[6] It is not in the province of this book to deal with doctrines concerning the Holy Spirit. But the phenomenon of spiritual power entering into and transforming life, then enduing that changed life with will and strength to accomplish high aims never before sought or desired, is of the very greatest concern. We would know how the force got into the life, how it accomplished the change within the life, and if there are laws by which this force with its transforming power can be brought into any life.

The New Testament story thrills with accounts of lives under the power of the Holy Spirit. The confident witness of these men and women was that they had found the way to this new power, and that they could direct anyone to the source, and that there was power sufficient and available for all. This new force was expressed in the daily lives of believers. Whatever there was of mysticism about this new spiritual force, it was entirely ethical and practical in all its outward expressions. At different times Christians were

[5] Drake, "The Problems of Religion," p. 6. "To live the religious life is more important than to understand the truth about religion."

[6] "An Outline of Christian Theology," p. 370.

cruelly persecuted, but there is absolutely no evidence that they were wrongdoers, even when judged by the biased ethical standards of their day. They were at times religious and spiritual zealots, but they were always morally clean and unoffending toward the ethical codes of their times. Principal Barry forcefully emphasizes this:

> From the naïve account of the great irruption of irresistible energies at Pentecost, when there came a sound like a rushing, mighty wind, through the records of the apostolic age, with its miraculous achievements in the creation of a new moral order, and building up of an organized social life as full of initiative as it was stable, which alone stood fast when civilization fell—it is the same story all the way. The triumph of Christianity in the Empire was the triumph of ethical achievement. For those generations, beyond any doubt, Christianity meant primarily life recharged and redirected. It is hardly possible to exaggerate the impression left on us by the New Testament of lives that out of weakness were made strong, expressing themselves freely and creatively in triumphant and effective service.[7]

The Changed World

The first effect upon the early Christians of this spiritual force within them was to change the world for them. Loving God as Christ loved, as they valiantly strove to do, brought to them an entirely new and transforming conception of God. God was still the Jehovah of their fathers, the judge and ruler of all the earth, but he was no longer the stern avenger of the law and the prophets. Instead, he was one

[7] "Christianity and Psychology," pp. 139, 140.

whom they could approach confidently, even when they came sin-stained; one who loved them as a father loves his child. This change in their conception of God released them from age-old fear. They gained a freedom they had never even thought of before, and in that freedom they developed courage and initiative. Their God had spoken to them as individuals, and as free moral agents they faced the world. They dared to make their own decisions and in the hour of trial found strength to withstand courts and kings. Best of all, they were freed from keeping all the paralyzing minutiæ that had been laid upon them by the Jewish spiritual leaders.

It is significant that these changes wrought by spiritual force were almost instantaneous. No long period of time elapsed and no special intellectual training was undergone after the spiritual power came into these lives. However, in the cases of most of the early Christians, this power came into lives which had a rich religious heritage; and for the most part those who were reached had been longing for some spiritual manifestation from their God. But the changes wrought by the spiritual force had in no way been anticipated. So far as Jewish history or tradition could suggest to these new spiritual enthusiasts, Jehovah had never before moved upon his people after this fashion. And surely never had any of their great poets or prophets thought of God as these now came to think of him.

This changed attitude toward God marks one of the

greatest steps ever taken in the spiritual progress of the race. Since God cared for them as a father cares for his children, they had nothing to fear from him unles they wronged him, and loving him as Christ had taught them to love him they could not willingly wrong or disobey him. This new attitude toward God was in effect the attitude of new men and women. Their lives had been necessarily altered and enlarged to make possible these new states of consciousness. Another effect of their changed relation to God was to release them from the fear of what men would do to them. Stephen, the first Christian martyr, with a haunting serenity upon his countenance, prayed for those who stoned him. (Acts 7:60.) Paul remonstrated with his fellow Christians because they sought to keep him from going to Jerusalem, where it was evident that dangers awaited him. Paul declared that he was ready to be bound and to die for the name of the Lord Jesus, whom he served. (Acts 21: 13.)

This new God-consciousness wrought an important change in these early Christians in another important direction: their minds were released from feeling that they were responsible for the results of the efforts they were making in behalf of their Christ. They were firmly convinced that he was spiritually present, directing their thoughts and acts, therefore the work they did was his and not theirs. If seeming failure was met with at any point, they were not troubled because their leader was directing along a long line, and with him "a day was as a thousand years and a thousand

years as a day." Their confidence that he was working in and through them relieved their minds from anxious cares. At times this lack of concern for the practical, material affairs threatened serious consequences to the new movement, and leaders found it necessary to admonish their followers that to be worthy of the kingdom of God they must prove themselves worthy citizens of the world in which they lived. That these early Christians swung too far at times seems only natural. They had suddenly come into possession of spiritual force, and the importance of merely mundane matters receded.

Our chief concern is the functioning of spiritual force through the medium of a human life, and we are not immediately concerned with the theological or psychological explanations of this force or of the reactions of individuals to the force. The fact is well attested that the early Christians did exert an influence upon the civilization of the early Christian era out of all proportion to their numbers or to their standing socially or politically. However historians have accounted for this unique influence, the Christians themselves attributed whatever strength or goodness they had experienced to the spiritual force which came directly from Christ. Not the least strange, to their contemporaries, of the many new ways of the sect was the happiness of the Christians and their contentment with their lot, which in many cases to the outsider looked worse than it had been before they had accepted the new faith. To an orthodox Jew it was inexplica-

ble that one could have suffered loss of property, been deserted by friends, and subjected to persecution, and yet could be happy in the thought that his God was with him. That the early Christians in the midst of material reverses did live as though they had gone far toward the consummation of their highest hopes is strong evidence of the work of spiritual force within them. A little later recruits to Christianity came from the slave class and from lower strata of Gentile society. This new faith had the strange effect of making these unfortunates fairly contented with their bitter lot, and it produced from among them many beautiful characters.

The changes wrought in individuals from such different strata of society, and with such totally different backgrounds of race and training, were so similar that the Christians readily recognized each other and fellowship was genuine regardless of former connections or standing. A new order was constituted in reality before there was any form for it. The Christian Church was organized to meet the spiritual needs of those who were already of a new spiritual order. Members in widely scattered places were bound together by spiritual bonds before there were forms or doctrines.

The zeal and loyalty for this new "way" was not nationalism, for in it were people from nations which held a bitter antipathy toward each other; but as Christians they treated each other as brethren. Few, if any, in the early days entered this new fellowship for the

sake of wealth, security, or in the hope of larger material opportunity, for Christiantiy promised no such advantages. They entered because of a new religious awakening through which they had passed, and they stayed because they felt themselves to be identified with the new spiritual order. Their happiness and security were in the spiritual force which was within each one. Each was satisfied with his new condition because it brought him more nearly to the realization of his selfhood.

Thus it is apparent that from the very beginning loving God and loving man as Christ loved was an aid to the attainment of aspirations. This new force functioned through the highest and best part of man's religious nature. It brought new reality to religion. Each Christian felt that his new religion was getting him somewhere. He felt a vital contact with spiritual forces outside of him, and he was delightfully conscious of a new and satisfying union with those about him.

History shows that religious aspiration has been one of the chief impetuses to man's struggle upward. Fiske says that religious aspiration "is nothing more or less than yearning after the highest possible completeness of spiritual life."[8] Few, if any, of even the most earnest Christians have ever realized full satisfaction of their aspirations,[9] but in possessing the spir-

[8] "Through Nature to God," p. 53.

[9] Rudolph C. Eucken, "Can We Still Be Christians?" p. 150. "We may say here at the outset that from the very beginning Christianity's main endeavor was not directed toward making unconditional happiness for man as he is; it sought first and fore-

itual force—or being possessed by the spiritual force—they have been confident that they were on the way to achieve life's ideals. Hopeful pursuit of spiritual ideals, as of other aims and desires, is perhaps more satisfying than complete attainment. The new world into which the spiritual rebirth brought the Christians inspired new aims and set new hopes.

Changed Men and Women

The vast work done by the few devoted followers of Jesus after the resurrection experiences shows that they were marvelously changed from the very ordinary men they appeared to be when they stepped into the New Testament story. Paul, a man of great force before his conversion, became one of the most dynamic characters of history under the urge of spiritual force. Conversion has always changed life. So well is this fact accepted that even those who are not Christians feel free to pass judgment upon those who claim to be Christians. The fruits of converted lives from the time of Christ to the present are abundant proof of the force of this spiritual current in human life.

The experience which comes to those who follow the formula given by Christ at the time they first realize the spiritual current within them is commonly called conversion. Of conversions there are many varieties, but the fundamental effect of conversion has been the

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most to make something new of him, and it was only to the renewed man that it promised a genuine happiness—that is to say, peace and blessedness."

same throughout the centuries. "What is attained," says William James, "is often an altogether new level of spiritual vitality, a relatively heroic level, in which impossible things have become possible, and new energies and endurances are shown. The personality is changed, the man *is* born anew, whether or not his psychological idiosyncrasies are what give the particular shape to his metamorphosis."[10]

Alfred Clair Underwood emphasizes the note of happiness which accompanies and follows conversion: "There is a great contrast between Paul, the overanxious Pharisee, and the jubilant Christian apostle. The despairing cry, 'O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?' is replaced by the song of victory, 'Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.' The new and buoyant sense of moral ability is an unfailing spring of joy to the apostle and to the other New Testament converts. After Pentecost the disciples 'take their food with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God' (Acts 2:46). After his conversion the Ethiopian eunuch goes 'on his way rejoicing' (Acts 8:39; cf. 8:8). Likewise the Philippian jailer 'rejoiced greatly' (Acts 16:34). Naturally, this joy figured largely in the Epistles of Paul (1 Thess, 1:6; 5:16; Rom. 12:12; 14:17; 15:13; 2 Cor. 1:24; 6:10; 8:2; Gal. 5:22; Phil. 1:25; 3:1; 4:4)."[11]

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[10] "Varieties of Religious Experience," p. 241.

[11] "Conversions: Christian and Non-Christian," pp. 153, 154.

This writer goes on to quote other passages, and to emphasize the fact that evidences of the notes of joy in the New Testament Christians are abundant.

Many different explanations of conversion have been offered, but those who speak of their own experiences testify to the fact that it wrought changes in their lives. From Professor Starbuck's list of conversion testimonials we choose a few examples: "The opening of my spiritual eyes was a great event; there was no change otherwise. I had always done as well as I knew." "The chief change was in my inmost purpose. I was no longer self-centered." "The change was marked and radical. I had feared God; now I loved him. I did not rest in ceremonies except as a means of growth." "Then God had been far off in the sky, too holy and too good to let me get close to him. Now he was a tender, loving father and very near." "When rising from my knees I exclaimed, 'Old things have passed away, and all things have become new.' It was like entering another world—a new state of existence." "I felt an unfolding of truth and a revelation of God's ways. I underwent a moral and intellectual quickening."[12]

A modern account of personal conversion is given by Philip Cabot, a Harvard man, who after a successful business career found a new meaning in life through a religious experience:

> But after a few days even E. Phillips Oppenheim could not hold my attention, and one hot morning, throwing

[12] "The Psychology of Religion," p. 119.

down the book in despair, my eye fell on "The Meaning of Prayer." I began to browse on it with a vacant mind which rapidly changed to an absorption so complete that I was keenly annoyed by the arrival of lunch time, three hours later. That afternoon I went back to Oppenheim, but finding him intolerable, took up again "The Meaning of Prayer" with a rather sheepish feeling to be reading such a book. The hours of the afternoon, however, vanished as those of the morning, and supper was another unwelcome interruption—a remarkable fact for a man living on a starvation diet, in whom the pangs of hunger were never quenched.

After supper I sat down to think. This thing looked serious. Here was I for the first time in my life bored with novels and absorbed in worship. Was this the first stage of conversion, or the madness which preceded death?

After a few days of this sort, during which I experimented and examined my sensations with scientific coldness, I was convinced that I was not mad. Something different was in process. It seemed that in worship, or prayer, and in my Bible, the solution of the riddle of the universe had been revealed to me; for I was living in a new world of peace, beauty, and gladness, such as I had never conceived. I was devouring the Sacred Books with the hunger of a starving man; the material world with its harassing duties, dangers, and excitements had faded on the horizon, and my wreck of a body (to maintain which in operation at all had been taking most of my time and all of my will power) seemed a wholly secondary matter which was looking after itself very well.

That condition has continued except that I have returned to the world of men, taken up again my daily chores with the keenest interest and with a sureness of touch and an absence of worry and excitement to which all my associates can testify, and my health has continued to improve in a remarkable way. My experience was, I think, a sort of "conversion," though not of the

usual type; for subsequent reading has taught me that the sensations of genuine conversions of the explosive type, such as often occurs to those in middle life, are so ecstatic and ineffable as to be beyond the power of man to describe. Certainly it has never been done. Adjective is piled on adjective, as Ossa on Pelion, but no clear picture results; and as to what might be called normal conversion, of the sort which comes to thousands during adolescence, it is apparently such an easy and painless process as to escape observation, and so descriptive analysis, in most cases. I conclude, therefore, that mine was not a genuine conversion, for the process was perfectly conscious and easily described.

Sitting in my great cool living room, with the humming of the bees and the sound of the river in my ears; rowing on the river at sunrise; mowing my grass or weeding my garden, or even while putting on my boots, ideas would pop into my mind and automatically fit themselves in with other ideas like the pieces of a picture puzzle. Sometimes they took places apparently without reference to the ideas already there, and for days would hang in space, so to speak. But gradually the gaps were filled in and the picture became complete.

At the time, the process seemed miraculous, and I had the feeling of being controlled by an external power; but, as I was spending much time in reading the Bible, "The Meaning of Prayer," "Varieties of Religious Experience," and other books on philosophy, I now see that the ideas gleaned from those books and sinking into my subconscious mind were simply reappearing after the process of assimilation had reached a certain stage. My mind wandered very much, concentration was never achieved, and it is certain that no reasoning process produced the final result. It was mainly subconscious, but, by a gradual process extending over some weeks, a clear picture was produced, the picture of the relation of my soul to all other souls, and thus to the Whole, the Infinite, or God—who is the sum of all.[13]

[13] "Except Ye Be Born Again," pp. 19-24.

Perhaps this account reveals contact with spiritual power all the more clearly because the writer does not class it as a conversion. He would no doubt agree that it was religious; and he seems quite certain that he had made contact with spiritual force. He says:

> My conversion, therefore, while miraculous, did not excite me, for even at first it seemed far more credible and normal than the atomic theory, for example, or electrical phenomena, such as alternating currents, telephones, and wireless; and, as I have examined at more leisure and more throughness what took place, I think I see in it the normal working of cause and effect, based upon laws which are of twin birth with man; a part of the law of the universe, but one which each of us must painfully rediscover for himself. The truth which had always been known had just dawned upon me—namely, that there is a material body and a spiritual body; that the spiritual body, in other words the soul, must be tended and fed as well as the material body, and that worship of God by prayer is the method by which it is fed. Without such feeding it will die, and in my case a starved or ill-nourished soul had produced almost fatal reactions upon my body.[14]

The description of his conversion by Jerry McAuley, founder and for a long time the superintendent of Water Street Mission, New York City, emphasizes the almost overwhelming flood of spiritual emotions which poured into his life:

> All at once it seemed as if something supernatural was in my room. I was afraid to open my eyes. I was in agony, and the sweat rolled off my face in great drops. Oh, how I longed for God's mercy! Just then, in the

[14] *Ibid.*, pp. 25, 26.

very height of my distress, it seemed as if a hand was laid upon my head, and these words came to me: "My son, thy sins, which are many, are forgiven." I do not know if I heard a word, yet the words were distinctly spoken to my soul. Oh, the precious Christ! How plainly I saw him, lifted on the cross for my sins! What a thrill went through me! I jumped from my knees! I paced up and down my cell. A heavenly light seemed to fill it; a softness and perfume like the fragrance of sweetest flowers. I did not know if I was living or not. I clapped my hands and shouted, "Praise God! Praise God!"

One of the guards was passing along the corridor and called out, "What's the matter?" "I've found Christ," I answered; "my sins are all forgiven! Glory to God!" He took out a paper from his pocket, wrote the number of my cell, and threatened to report me in the morning. But I didn't care for that. My soul was all taken up with my great joy. But the next morning nothing happened to me, and I think the Lord made him forget it. What a night that was! I shall surely never forget the time when the Lord appeared as my gracious deliverer from sin.[15]

The best evidence of spiritual power come into his life is the fact of what Jerry McAuley did after his conversion. Going back into the very haunts where he had lived as a bum and a criminal, he worked mightily for the restoration and reconstruction of wrecked lives in that worst section of New York's slums. Through years of unremitting service he revealed not only that he had been remade, but that he had with him continually a spiritual power which enabled him to bring things to pass.

[15] "His Life and Work," p. 19.

In his "Varieties of Religious Experience" William James cites numerous cases of conversion, and in each case the individual was conscious of spiritual force coming directly into his life. His quotations from a letter written by M. Alphonse Ratisbonne, who before his conversion had been a free-thinking Jew, show the complete and wonderful transformation which can be worked in one in a very brief time. Ratisbonne was not conscious of desiring any fellowship with God or contact with spiritual force, yet this force came upon him suddenly and with such power that it completely overwhelmed him and entirely altered his views of God and of himself (pp. 223-226). Professor James has multiplied examples illustrating the various psychological aspects of conversion, but what particularly interests us here in his accounts is that, no difference what led to the conversion or what manifestations accompanied it, the one converted was conscious of a new and vital contact with spiritual power. So almost universal is this experience mentioned in accounts of conversions that it seems necessary to conclude that it is a part of conversion. It appears to be this consciousness of spiritual force within that makes the converted person feel that there has been something entirely individual and personal about the experience and in the relation which has come as a result of that experience.

Harold Begbie, in "Twice-Born Men," and in succeeding volumes which he has written from the results of his investigations of converted people, has multiplied instances of transformations through spiritual

force come into the life of individuals. In no instance was there any doubt as to the force which had brought about the transformation. He also records cases where those who had had no sense or appreciation of spiritual power had become keenly conscious of this force through conversion. His story of "Old Born Drunk" tells of a man so debased by hereditary taints and subsequent evil habits that he was scarcely human. Yet through conversion this man became conscious of spiritual force in his life; and through the uplift of this new impulse he attained victory over degrading habits and achieved worth-while virtues. In "Souls in Action" Begbie tells of a young man from a good home who went down into the depths of sin, then through conversion he became conscious of a spiritual force in his life. Using the aid this force offered, he worked his way back to a place where he could respect himself and later achieved a man's work. In "Other Sheep" this writer tells of those in other lands who through conversion became conscious of union with spiritual force and thereby reached heights they would not otherwise have attained.

Only a small percentage of those who have arrived at a conscious relationship with God have passed through an explosive type of conversion. Says James: "The forms which regenerative change effects have, then, no general spiritual significance, but only a psychological significance." [16] What matters is the results

[16] *Ibid.*, p. 240.

of the conversion or of the religious experience, however arrived at. Professor Coe says: "The ultimate test of religious values is nothing psychological, nothing definable in terms of *how it happens,* but something ethical, definable only in terms of *what is attained.*"[17]

The change in life, whatever the regenerative form, followed the incoming of spiritual force. Conversion did not come because the individual suddenly loved God and loved man with a new determination. The love for God and love for his neighbor followed the man's conversion. Thus spiritual force is primarily the cause rather than the effect of the love state. But after regenerative change has opened a channel for spiritual power it requires volition on the part of the individual to keep the channel free. No matter how ecstatic the state following the conversion experience, the consciousness of spiritual force wanes if the love norm is not followed. The command, therefore, is, "Thou *shalt* love thy neighbor as thyself." The new feeling of love toward God and love toward man comes with conversion, and the inflow of new spiritual power will nourish this love; but it requires definite willing, supported by more or less constant effort, to sustain this attitude of loving.

Spiritual force is constant and all-pervasive; but it becomes an active agent in our lives only at our willing. The process or processes by which our lives are put

[17] "The Spiritual Life," p. 144. (Quoted by James, "Varieties of Religious Experience," p. 241.)

into the right relationship toward God and toward our fellow men opens in each life a channel by which spiritual force enters and functions in the individual life. Loving God and loving man as Christ loved keeps this channel open for the constant flow of spiritual force. Attempted analogies here might be ridiculous, or even disastrous to the development of the thought, but the electric current flowing through cables is suggestive. This figure may be enlarged. Electricity is supposed by good scientists to be all-pervasive. Yet before it will obey the command of a switch conditions must have been met, and a proper channel for the transportation of the power must have been provided.

CHAPTER IX

LOVE A UNIFYING FORCE

Love is a unifying force as well as a spiritual measuring line. Though following the love norm does work transformation, spiritual force is constructive and unifying. The Jews of Jesus's time thought that this young leader was mutilating and destroying their religion and spiritual conceptions. With all the changes which Jesus brought to religion there was no mutilation or loss. The new that he contributed was relatively small. He gave a standard by which all the elements in religion and morals can be unified. With him, as with us still to-day, religion was mystical, ethical, and cosmogonic; but spiritual life was one stream, a unified force which moves forward toward the accomplishments of life's purposes. Since this force has been unified by love—or to change the figure, since it is love which keeps the channel open for the free flowing of the unified spiritual stream, spiritual force cannot be harmful. No one needs fear to have this stream flowing through his life, because it unifies, conserves, and multiplies.

Promotes Chief Objectives of Life

Coming into conscious contact with spiritual force does not change the person, but it does develop the personality. Though Paul admitted a complete up-

setting of his immediate program, he never intimated that he was not the same person who had so bitterly persecuted the Christians. Neither did it in any way alter the fact that he was a Jew. A Jew he was to the end, with pride of race and a deep love for those to whom he was bound by ties of blood. His chief object in life had been to serve God, and the new contact enabled him to serve him with released powers which he had not known that he possessed and to achieve heights he never could have reached had he continued as the zealous persecutor of Christians. It is Paul the Christian who has enriched the world. Following the clearly marked steps of Paul's career we can observe the working of spiritual force to which Paul gave himself so completely.

Paul definitely asserted that his conversion was a turning point which brought him a new conception of God and gave him the spiritual power which he later used and rejoiced in. Of Paul's interest in this event Dr. Charles E. Jefferson says: "His religious experience was to him the most precious and thrilling part of his life, and he took delight in narrating it to as many as were willing to listen. He told it even to the mob which wished to tear him to pieces. He rehearsed it in Cæsarea to the Roman procurator and the Jewish king. That amazing experience was behind all that he thought and wrote and did. It was there that God shone into his heart, and he saw the glory of God in the face of Jesus. From that hour Paul never ceased to rejoice in talking about God. Wheth-

er he is speaking to peasants in Lystra or to philosophers in Athens, his favorite subject is God."[1]

But Paul the Christian was the unification of all the strength of Saul the Pharisee. He did not give up a life-sized ambition to follow meek and effeminate ways. He was now saved from uncertainties and any conflicting emotions. The inflow of spiritual power cleansed him of all that retarded his full strength, and he became a medium through which could be accomplished the purpose of the force which gripped him. This force he conceived to be Christ. Dr. Jefferson goes on to say that the central word in Paul's vocabulary is "Christ." "He lives in Christ. He can do all things in Christ. It is Christ who lives in him. It is Christ with whom he longs to dwell forever. . . . Old things are passed away, all things are become new. His whole nature was transformed. Love took the place of law. Liberty supplanted bondage. . . . Through Christ Paul came into a series of new experiences; he found himself in possesion of peace and power, of hope and love and joy."[2]

Paul is perhaps the best recorded example of a life transformed through regeneration, then yielded completely to the control of the spiritual force which had taken possession of him. As far as it was within his power, he loved God as Christ had loved him, and he loved his fellow man to his utmost capacity, thus pat-

[1] "Character of Paul," p. 345.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 346.

terning his life after his Master's. Through his life, which thus approximated the normal spiritual life, spiritual power flowed, enabling him to accomplish his chief objectives. In Paul we find clearly marked what Canon Shatford names the six marks of a Christian: "Loyalty, courage, patience, humility, freedom, and generosity."[3]

1. Paul was *loyal.* Because of his loyalty he suffered scourgings, imprisonments, and probably death. He was loyal to his Hebrew heritage; although he was almost constantly persecuted, and often beaten, by the Jews, he never reviled them; he never denied his lineage even when it would have been to his advantage to do so. When driven from one place by them, he went to the Jewish inhabitants in the next place, where he took up his labors. To the end his "heart's desire" and his supplication to God for them was that they might be saved.

Paul was often imprisoned by the Roman authorities. But even when looking forward to being put to death through an edict from the courts, he was respectful and loyal to the Roman government. He suffered often at the hands of the law when innocent, yet he declared: "Rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil." (Rom. 13:3.)

But his great loyalty was to Christ. His epistles abound in glad acclaims of this loyalty which carried him beyond all fear of death. He counted it a privilege that he was accounted worthy to suffer for his

[3] "The Six Marks of a Christian."

Christ. He never complained about the hardness of his lot. He was a soldier under command of his great Captain, and his loyalty never permitted him to think of anything but obeying his Captain's orders.

2. Paul was *courageous:* his courage was phenomenal; no situation arose in which he was not master of himself, and quite often through his perfect self-control he was master of the situation. He withstood Peter and other apostles to the face on questions of doctrine. He steadfastly went on his way toward Jerusalem in spite of repeated warnings that serious danger lay in his path. His courage before mobs, before courts and kings is always refreshing, because it was so absolutely unflinching and so totally devoid of braggadocio.

3. Paul was *patient,* with a patience which surpassed all ordinary bounds. Beaten, hounded out of city after city by the Jews, he never became impatient with his own people. Though he occasionally spoke sharply to his followers, he constantly labored patiently to win them to his high vision.

4. Paul was *free,* gloriously free. At no time was this freedom more manifest than when he was enduring bonds and imprisonment. The twenty-seventh chapter of Acts records a shipwreck and a forced landing on the island of Malta. Paul, a bound prisoner, was the hero of the occasion and plainly was more free than any of the others.

5. Paul was *generous;* the phrase "generous to a fault" is not too strong to apply to him. He was

magnanimous not alone in giving of himself and his possessions, but in his attitude toward others, particularly toward his enemies.

It was the unifying of all these powers in his character which produced in Paul a strength which ranks him as one of the great of earth. Coupled with these which have been described as the distinct marks of a Christian were a trained intellect of unusual power, a broad education and a vast store of knowledge, and a personality which would have set him apart in any audience. All these forces under the impulsion of love were unified, and we have Paul, the great Christian leader.

Achieves Social Ideals

To show the unifying power of spiritual force in society would not be so easy; yet, though the individual is the unit of spiritual force, each member of a Christian group is influenced by the spiritual life of each other member of the group. Furthermore, this influence reaches beyond those who are influenced in their living by the love standard. Results of Christian missions in heathen lands depend quite as much upon spiritual living of the missionary as upon his teaching. The heathen learn the value of love when they see it *as* the missionary lives the love standard. In the chapter on "Spiritual Force in History" we saw that this force was a unifying as well as a purifying and strengthening agent.

More and more in individual, community, national, and international matters peace, good will, and love

are the forces which are uniting the good and repressing the evil. Thus is spiritual force moving through channels opened by the love norm to mold a new world. The specific work which we can accomplish, and must accomplish, through our volition is to keep the channel for the constant flow of spiritual force open through individual obedience to the high requirements of the love standard. While spiritual force functions through individual lives, it influences other lives that are touched by those who are channels of the spiritual force. Thus this transforming power is operating upon society even when society is all unconscious of its influence.

Unquestionably Jesus perceived that the world's betterment, for which he was concerned, depends upon spiritual force. The task he left his disciples was not primarily that of perfecting their own characters, nor yet the disseminating of his teachings, but rather making possible the operation of spiritual force for the world's good. The apostles and early missionaries did not consider themselves teachers or reformers. They had in their possession a dynamic spiritual force which they were using and enjoying, and which they believed had power to bless the world.

We of our day are particularly responsive to what has come to be spoken of as the social gospel. Says Rauschenbusch: "Neither is it novel. The social gospel is, in fact, the oldest gospel of all."[4] Many leaders to-day think this phase of spiritual development is be-

[4] "A Theology for the Social Gospel," pp. 24, 25.

ing overemphasized; or that other equally worthy phases are being overlooked. Professor Ellwood assures us that we need not worry over this development. He says: "Even though the social movement is not the main highway of the religious life, may it not be the way which lies most immediately before the mind of the present age and which indicates that step in God's education of the human race which this generation is called upon by him to take?"[5] Knowing the high worth of many of the social movements of our day, we must conclude that if Jesus walked among men to-day as he walked in old Palestine he would be identified with these movements.

We need some prophet-revelator to see for us how this river of God is enriching and making fruitful our world. When Ezekiel had his vision of a redeemed and fruitful Israel he saw a stream flowing from a spiritual source, which deepened and broadened without being enriched by any tributaries. The life-giving and healing powers were in the stream which brought life even to the stagnant death of the Dead Sea. John the Revelator saw in his ecstatic vision "a river of the water of life, bright as crsytal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb." What might not a prophet-seer see to-day as this spiritual stream flows on cleansing the land of greed, and lust, and evil-doing! A century ago children of tender age toiled long hours in mines, seeing the sun but seldom; and women were worked with less consideration than is now given to

[5] Ellwood, "Christianity and Social Science," p. 57.

beasts. To-day spiritual prophets urge us to work for the new day when poverty will be banished, disease controlled, and all who toil will receive a living wage. Reformers call us to battle against the sins and habits which have so long held the race in their thrall, and they promise victory through the aid of spiritual force which is surging through life.

As there have been in the past, there are those to-day who deride the visions of prophets, declaring that they have no promise for a practical age. But what the spirit has enabled prophets to see spiritual power has enabled determined souls to achieve. It is too early in the life of the race to declare that any visioned good for the race is impossible of achievement. We are coming to know something of the limits of some of the universe; but as yet there is no data to enable us even to conjecture the possibilities or limits of spiritual force.

In the past, and at the present, ideals and even the higher emotions have often been causes of divisions. Love of country is one of the higher emotions of the heart; yet love of country has been turned to aid wars and national hatreds. Devotion to family and class is commendable, but much of the misery of the world has been caused or contributed to by such devotion. Religion has been a mighty force in raising the standards and ideals of the world; but religion still sets people in armed camps against each other, as in Palestine at this hour, and has continually been the source of bitterest animosities.

Yet love is surely accomplishing its unifying work, and in these and all spiritual fields the tendency is to unite on the big principles rather than to divide over small issues.

Sustaining Power

Can spiritual force sustain the high ideals inspired by conversion, or attained through the cultivation of spiritual tendencies? Not unless an earnest effort is made to live the love norm. Spiritual force enters the channel opened for it; it does not force a path through resisting desires. Those who have maintained a channel for spiritual force through loving God and loving man as Christ loves testify to such sustaining power. Susan Coolidge wrote about the day-by-day worth of spiritual force in her life:

> "Every day is a fresh beginning,
> Every morn is a world made new."

The fact that one continues to be a Christian testifies to the strength of spiritual force quite as much as does the most cataclysmic conversion. All religious requirements stop at outward conformity: of necessity they cannot go farther. No Church can compel a man to open up a channel in his heart for the free flow of spiritual force. Each one of us is free to do as he pleases in the vast areas of his religious life. Therefore any one who maintains conscious contact with spiritual force does so of his own volition. All who enter this way do so by choice, and no one can be

coerced to continue therein. Therefore it is reasonable to conclude that any who are not satisfied with the way, no matter how long they have walked in it, may leave it. Particularly is this true in this day when no one needs to make a profession of religion for any appearance, or for the sake of social standing. Those who stay in the way do so because they love it, because it attracts and holds them. Christian lives are the best proof of the sustaining power of spiritual force.

Doubtless many would like more positive assurance than this that the well-being of the race is secure. Though spiritual force is all-pervasive, may not the time come when no one will seek its aid for the accomplishment of high ideals? The history of the race seems to justify the belief that so long as there are goals and ideals some members of the race will use every means available to attain them. So long as there is a spiritual nature in the human race there will be those who will respond to the call of Spirit. Jesus left the world almost as soon as his regenerative plan had been initiated. Up to that time, it appears, none of the small group of his immediate disciples clearly understood his plan, and surely individually and as a group they appeared poorly equipped to carry on his great program. Jesus believed in man. He seemed confident that man would continue to respond to the urge of the Spirit. This confidence the centuries has justified. Through the unfailing aid of spiritual force man is still meeting the high demands made upon him.

The greatest possibilities for growth and develop-

ment lie in the realm of the spiritual, even though the greatest progress of the race has been spiritual. We have gone far from wars between tribes of less than a thousand people in all parts of the inhabited earth; but we have farther yet to go before we achieve universal peace and an attitude of good will on the part of each individual toward every other individual. Potential growth in the spiritual realm far exceeds potential growth in the physical realm; and from the fields of psychology, economics, government, ethics, as well as from the fields of philosophy and religion, eager workers are entering the realm. It seems not to be the least daring to venture the prophecy that the next great field of human achievement will be the realm of the spiritual.

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